

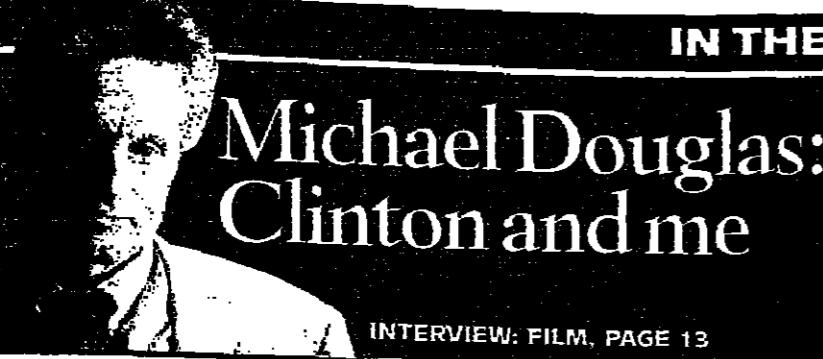
# THE INDEPENDENT

No 3.725

THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 1998



(1650p) 45p



**IN THE REVIEW**

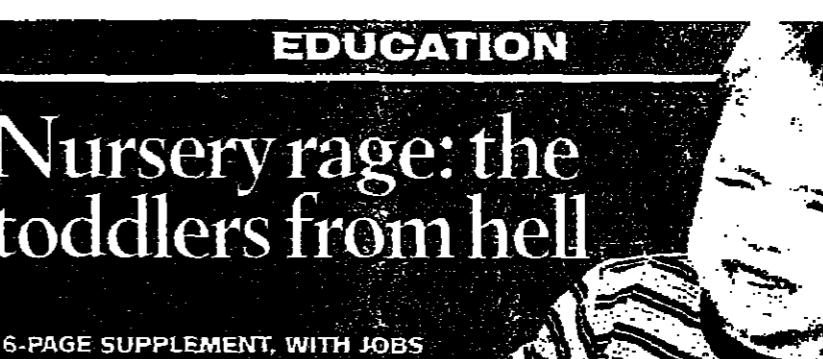
**Michael Douglas: Clinton and me**

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**Why Russia is in Vogue**

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**EDUCATION**

**Nursery rage: the toddlers from hell**

16-PAGE SUPPLEMENT, WITH JOBS

## Heath: 'I executed Polish soldier for wartime rape'



Sir Edward: 'I felt uneasy'

**SIR EDWARD** Heath commanded a firing squad that executed a Polish soldier for rape during the Second World War, according to a documentary that offers rare insights into an intensely private politician.

The episode, which had a profound effect on Sir Edward, took place when he was a major in the Royal Artillery in Germany at the end of the war. It is related for the first time in *A Very Singular Man*, a television

BY KATHY MARKS

REPORTED BY MICHAEL COCKERELL

and then later on when you pass over their ground, you see dead bodies lying around.

"That's one thing. That's war. But it's different when you have an individual. I didn't sleep particularly well that night."

The documentary, to be broadcast on BBC2 on Sunday evening, also reveals that senior Conservatives tried to marry off Sir Edward when he was prime minister because they felt that his bachelor status made him

appear remote and out of touch.

The bride whom they had in mind was Dame Moura Lympany, a concert pianist who regularly visited Downing Street and Chequers while he was in office from 1970-74. He was an accomplished pianist and conductor, and the two

played in concerts together.

Dame Moura, now 82, like Sir Edward, tells Mr Cockerell that she received a visit from the late Sir Tufton Beamish, a member

of the executive of the 1922 Committee. "Tufton came to see me at my house and said, 'Ted must get married, will you marry him?'" she says. "Well, I would have regarded it as a great honour if Ted had asked me to marry him."

Asked whether she would have accepted, she says: "Ah, if I hadn't been in love with somebody else."

Sir Edward, who has never married, tells Mr Cockerell: "I

liked Moura and apparently she liked me. We had an interest in food and wine and in discussing musical performances."

When

he is shown footage of Dame Moura describing Sir Tufton's visit, Sir Edward's eyes light up. He says: "Tufton never discussed it with me, but nothing surprises me anymore."

Gallantly, he declines to say whether he would have married her.

Sir Edward, who is still an

MP, joined the Royal Artillery as a gunner at the beginning of the war, and ended his military career as a colonel in Germany in 1946.

A friend, Lord Healey, a former Labour Chancellor, says he was "enormously changed" by his experiences as a gunner.

"He had a toughness which had not been actually visible – I don't say he didn't have it – before the war, but it was very visible after the war," he says.

## Police seize Arab terror suspects

SEVEN MEN suspected of being linked to Islamic terrorism were arrested yesterday in London.

The men, believed to have links with Osama bin Laden, the alleged terrorist said to have ordered last month's US embassy bombings in East Africa, were picked up in a series of early morning raids after a lengthy surveillance operation by MI5 and Scotland Yard's Anti Terrorist Branch.

The men are suspected of involvement in terrorism, although it was unclear last night whether this was in Britain or abroad. They are believed to have links with Mr bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian dissident currently believed to be in Afghanistan, is wanted by America in connection with the attacks on its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in which more than 250 people were killed.

Security services fear fundamentalists were planning to hit a number of American targets after the United States cruise missile attack on a pharmaceuticals factory in Sudan in revenge for the embassy bombings.

Security has already been tightened at the US Embassy in London and other high-profile locations such as the Planet Hollywood restaurant, whose Cape Town branch was bombed last month.

All the men arrested yesterday at seven addresses in north-west and west London were being interviewed last night by the police. An eighth address, believed to be business premises, was being searched.

Armed officers were not used during the arrests, known as Operation Challenge, and Scotland Yard stressed last night that there had been no threat of an imminent attack.

Scotland Yard has kept the FBI in the United States in-

BY JASON BENNETTO  
Crime Correspondent

formed about the operation.

The arrests, under section 14 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989, are not believed to have linked to any unsolved terrorist incident.

Nor were the raids connected with the recent changes in anti-terrorism laws giving police the right to act against senior suspected terrorists plotting attacks in other countries.

Bakri Muhammad, a spokesman for the International Islamic Front, which supports Mr bin Laden's aims, claimed the seven men arrested were all political refugees who had fled the Egyptian government after campaigning against it.

Mr Muhammad said the men were "well-known political refugees". And he added: "They publish leaflets and send faxes – they have nothing to do with terrorism or Bin Laden."

He said they had been in Britain for more than four years and belonged to a number of Egyptian Islamic movements. These men are well known by the Special Branch. They are here as political refugees."

He said Special Branch officers raided the men's homes in the morning and that they had all gone with them peacefully. Their families have since moved to friends living near by.

He added that one man in his 30s was a solicitor in Egypt and head of the "Organisation for Defending the Human Rights of Egypt". It is believed that at least one of those detained is from Saudi Arabia.

The FBI believes that Mr bin Laden's organisation, Al Qaeda, is committed to murdering American military personnel stationed in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Somalia and elsewhere, and killing American civilians in France from London.

worldwide.

Two men, one a Yemeni, Muhammad al-Owhali, and the other a Kenyan citizen, Muhammad Howaida, have already been flown to the US to stand trial for the Nairobi embassy bombing.

The FBI is seeking a third man Haroun Fazl, from the Comoros Islands, in connection with the bombings, and it has put a reward of up to \$2m (£1.5m) on his head.

Terrorism experts believe that Mr bin Laden, a multi-millionaire, used his wealth to fund the bombings in Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam on 7 August.

The attacks prompted American retaliation in the shape of air strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan.

The information gathered by MI5 and police surveillance was passed to Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Branch, commanded by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Alan Fysh, which made yesterday's arrests. MI5 has been stung by criticism that London is a hotbed of international terrorism.

Senior Yard sources admit London, like other capital cities, is a "target-rich" environment for fundamentalist groups who are intent on pursuing a holy war against America or Britain.

However, they say they are more concerned about a maverick group committing a "one-off" random attack on a target such as Planet Hollywood, which is impossible to predict or plan for.

The last major Middle-East-inspired attack in London was in 1994 when two Palestinians planted a car bomb outside the Israeli Embassy, causing £5m damage and injuring 13 people.

The FBI believes that Mr bin Laden's organisation, Al Qaeda, is committed to murdering American military personnel stationed in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Somalia and elsewhere, and killing American civilians in France from London.



A soldier from the Southern Africa intervention force watching looters pillage a shop in the Lesotho capital, Maseru. Report page 14 AP

## Ashdown warns Blair 'not to betray voters'

PADDY ASHDOWN will today

warn Tony Blair that he risks betraying the voters and "damaging" the Government's working relationship with the Liberal Democrats.

In his strongest attack so far on Mr Blair, the Liberal Democrat leader will tell the Prime Minister that their joint project for constitutional reform is threatened by the expected decision to delay and water down the controversial Freedom of Information Bill.

Mr Ashdown will also use his keynote speech at his party's conference in Brighton to defuse growing frustration at his policy of "constructive opposition". Many party supporters believe this has forced the leadership

BY COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

to pull too many punches against the Government.

Mr Ashdown has been holding back some of his party's MPs from calls to break off co-operation with the cabinet committee on constitutional reform.

The frustration has been fuelled by fears that Mr Blair will renege on the promise to hold a referendum on proportional representation in this Parliament on the outcome next month of the Jenkins commission on electoral reform.

Mr Ashdown will tell Liberal Democrats they are closer than ever to achieving their goal of

electoral reform and they should not "blow it" now by seeking to break off relations with the Government. Clearly damping down expectations over the Jenkins commission, he will urge them to be realistic about co-operation with the Government.

Sources close to Mr Ashdown said: "He will tell them that there are opportunities to be grasped – you have to be up to it." But he will make it clear to Mr Blair that the relationship could reach breaking point if he seeks to water down the commitment to Freedom of Information, as contained in the Labour manifesto, and fails to deliver on a PR referendum in this Parliament.

Opposition to PR, page 2

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## Nunn takes National Theatre into rep

THE NATIONAL Theatre will shortly announce that it is forming a repertory company of actors. The company, which will perform in four plays together, will start productions next spring and might eventually take up a residency outside London.

The initiative by the National

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

al's artistic director, Trevor Nunn, will mark a return to old style "rep" in which actors build up a company ethos and familiarity with their audience as well as achieving a recognisable style of performing

The move, planned for some time by Mr Nunn, will go some way to answering the anxieties expressed by Sir Ian McKellen who told *The Independent* yesterday that the lack of repertory companies meant actors could not hone their skills properly, and that when he played at the National he had no clear

idea of the sort of people that were in the audience. Sir Ian is spending the next six months acting in repertory in Leeds.

A close associate of Trevor Nunn said: "Trevor is moving towards this and there will be an announcement soon. He feels you can explore Shakespeare, for example, in much

more depth with a company that has established a certain style."

A spokeswoman for the National Theatre said its audience was predominantly middle-class, middle-aged and white. An actors audience? page 3

Leading article, Review, page 3

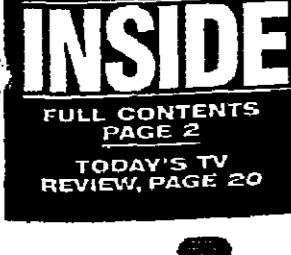
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**HOME**

A European judgment means Britain will make it illegal for parents to beat their children

PAGE 9

**FOREIGN**

South Africa's military intervention in the tiny kingdom of Lesotho has proved extremely costly

PAGE 14

**BUSINESS**

The DTI has blocked Ladbrokes £565m purchase of the Coral betting chain

PAGE 19

**SPORT**

The golfer Nick Faldo and his coaching guru, David Leadbetter, have split after 15 years

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## Minister backs pet passports

The Government's radical overhaul of the quarantine laws includes plans for 'pet passports' and a new licensing scheme for Britain's 14 million cats and dogs. Page 4

## Tate archives 'altered for fraud'

An alleged art fraudster was accused in court of altering Tate Gallery archives to create histories for fake works by famous modern artists, which flooded the market. Page 5

## Ashdown defeated on schools

Party activists at the Liberal Democrat conference overwhelmingly turned down key proposals to shift power over schools from local councillors to parents. Page 10

## FOREIGN NEWS

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## Iran's hardliners losing grip

The easing of the death threat against Salman Rushdie is a sign of President Mohammad Khatami's power to control Iran's conservative clerics. Page 12

## Nato plans force against Serbs

Nato took its first steps towards assembling a multinational force to carry out air strikes to halt Slobodan Milosevic's offensive against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. Page 12

## BUSINESS NEWS

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## Go-ahead for power takeover

PowerGen is to agree to the sale of double the generating capacity it first offered in return for approval of its £1.5bn takeover of East Midlands Electricity. Page 18

## SPORTS NEWS

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## Hick on stand-by for Ashes tour

Græme Hick, who was left out of the England party for the Ashes tour of Australia, has been put on stand-by with Andrew Caddick and Phil Tufnell. Page 25

## McMahon resigns from Swindon

Former Liverpool and England midfielder Steve McMahon resigned as manager of £5m-in-debt Swindon Town after failing to win the confidence of supporters. Page 30

THURSDAY REVIEW  
20-PAGE BROADSHEET SECTION

## Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

'More than one-third of fathers and mothers confessed to administering "severe" physical punishment, including beatings, burnings and cold baths.' Page 4

## Andreas Whittam Smith

MIS has an instinctive reluctance to put anything at all into the public domain. Thus, the only files which are available at the Public Record Office cover the period from its foundation in 1909 to 1919.' Page 5

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Cryptic crossword, section one, page 30



Recycled paper made up 46.03 per cent of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1997

## PR opposed by Labour grass roots

By ANDREW GRICE  
Political Editor

likely that working class people were elected to Parliament.

Ken Jackson, the AEEU's general secretary, said: "No more proof is needed - the Labour Party will not want to take a leap into the dark and abandon first-past-the-post. Unions and constituencies are united in rejecting change for change's sake."

An AEEU source said the poll findings "put the skids" under Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown's attempt to win a seat in Mr Blair's Cabinet and form a coalition with Labour.

The union's survey was dismissed by the Make Votes Count campaign, which supports change. It said the poll was flawed because the questions were loaded, and that some chairmen had not had time to consult members.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, adds his voice to those cabinet ministers who oppose PR in today's New Statesman magazine. He says: "Most people know that one of the features of Parliamentary democracy is the link between the member and the constituency. I value that, which is one of the reasons why I remain to be convinced."

A huge majority (66 per cent) of those polled believed the introduction of a regional list system of candidates would give more power to Labour headquarters and take it away from ordinary members. More than half (56 per cent) thought regional lists would make it less

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likely that working class people were elected to Parliament.



Trevor Rees-Jones: law suit marks final breakdown of relations with former employer

## Rees-Jones sues the Ritz

TREVOR REES-JONES, the

By JOHN LICHFIELD  
in Paris

bodyguard who survived the crash which killed Diana, Princess of Wales, yesterday brought a legal action against the Ritz Hotel for its role in events leading to the accident.

The move could lead to criminal charges against senior managers of the Paris hotel, which is owned by Mr Rees-Jones' former employer, Mohammed al-Fayed. Although technically a complaint against

persons unknown, Mr Rees-Jones alleges negligence on the part of the Ritz, and a limousine company, in allowing the crash car to be driven by an unqualified driver.

The legal action marks the final breakdown of relations between the former bodyguard and Mr Fayed. Mr Rees-Jones, who resigned from Mr Fayed's

staff in May, is already suing the Harrods owner in Britain. He alleges that he has reneged on a written commitment to pay all his legal bills arising from the accident in August last year. If the British suit is successful, Mr Fayed would have to fund Mr Rees-Jones's action against the Ritz, his own company.

Mr Rees-Jones was grievously injured in the 1997 crash which killed Diana, Dodi Fayed, and their driver, Henri Paul.

YESTERDAY		EXTREMES	
Wormsley	Cloudy (73°F)	Coldest: (40°F) Balsamico 13C (55°F)	Warmest: Machynlleth 0.02 hrs
Westerham	Cloudy (68°F)	Summeton Bedell 10.8 hrs	
For 24 hrs to 2pm Wednesday			
		Sun Rate hrs m °F	Max °F
Aberdeen	1.2	0.01	12
Anglesey	10.4	0	68
Andover	0.0	0	68
Belfast	1.8	0	59
Birmingham	5.1	0	59
Bournemouth	8.9	0	72
Bristol	5.1	0	68
Cardiff	0.7	0	68
Claire	0	0	61
Crauder	3.8	0	59
Edinburgh	0.01	0	58
Falkirk	0.6	0	66
Falmouth	9.8	0	74
Glasgow	4.7	0	68
Hove	9.5	0	68
Isle-of-Wight	7.5	0	68
Leeds	0.0	0	68
Lerwick	3.9	0	72
Littlehampton	8.5	0	72
Loughborough	4.5	0	68
London	5.1	0	68
Manchester	5.1	0	68
Margate	9.5	0	68
Morecambe	5.0	0	68
Nottingham	1.8	0	61
Norwich	4.3	0	63
Oxford	2.2	0	64
Plymouth	8.7	0	68
Salcombe	1.1	0	65
Scarborough	1.1	0.01	17
Sheffield	0	0	68
Southend	0	0	68
Southwark	0	0	68
Sunderland	0	0	68
Swanage	8.4	0	66
Torby	7.9	0	62
Weymouth	8.0	0	68
Weymouth	0	0	68

THE WORLD		EUROPE NOON TODAY	
Key		1024	
10-10C	10-10C	1000	1000
11-11C	11-11C	1000	1000
21-21C	21-21C	1000	1000
31-40C	31-40C	1000	1000

Key: Isobars: air pressure in mbars; warm front in mbar; cold front in mbar; occluded front in mbar

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1000 - 1024 = 24 hours

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# Has London theatre reached the stage where it can't find a decent audience?

'London Theatre is impersonal. Its audiences are full of tourists; its actors do not have a communal spirit'

WHEN SIR Ian McKellen fired his broadside at theatre in the capital in an interview in *The Independent* yesterday, he did so in spirited style. He questioned whether some people in the audience at the National Theatre could even speak the language and wondered why there were no black faces in the audience. And he said he was moving for six months to Leeds to fulfilment in the repertory company of the West Yorkshire Playhouse.

Sir Ian is not the first of Britain's great classical actors to be caustic about London audiences. Six years ago Sir Alec Guinness turned his back on the West End, remarking: 'I'd rather go to the provinces where they still speak English and not Japanese.'

Sir Ian McKellen chooses more lyrical language. He does not, he says, want to 'betray the soul of acting' by performing any more in large theatres with no idea of what sort of people are in the audience. In the regions, he says, local people look on the theatre as theirs and build up a relationship with the actors, just as the actors in an old-fashioned rep company where they appear in several plays and build up a relationship with each other.

In Leeds, the West Yorkshire Playhouse artistic director, Jude Kelly, is making radical attempts to bring theatre to new audiences. There has already been a cyber cafe, and there will soon be video screens in the foyer to accompany an adaptation of the best-selling book *Deadmeat* by the multimedia artist Q.

Jude Kelly said: 'To secure the future of theatre we need to find ways to encourage new, young audiences. To do this it is essential that we explore mediums that excite and enthral younger generations and celebrate subjects and ideas that appeal to them.'

And London's best-known

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh has chosen to premiere his second re-working of the musical *Martin Guerre* in Leeds, saying: 'The West Yorkshire Playhouse is without doubt one of the most exciting and adventurous regional theatres in the country and I am proud to be a part of it.'

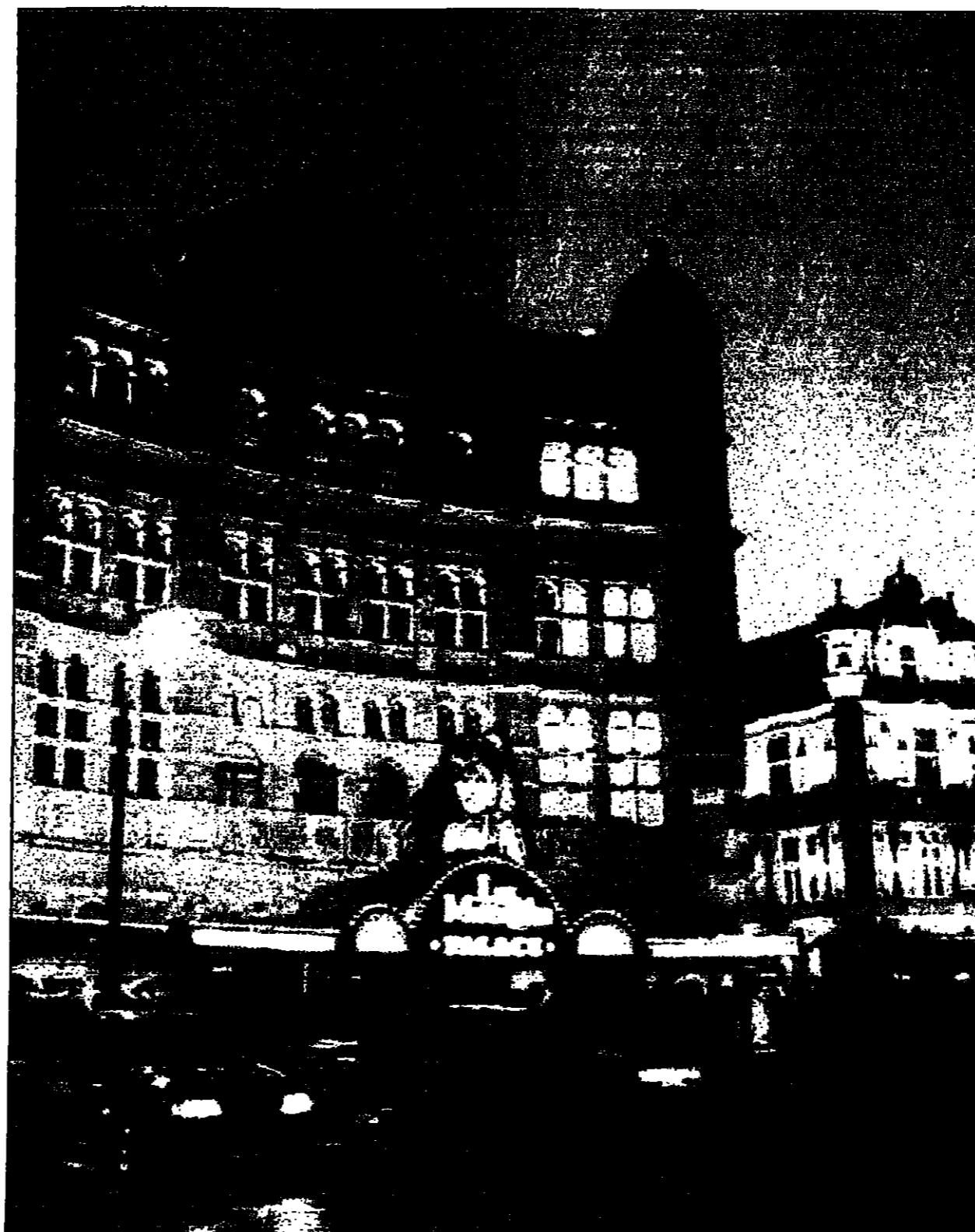
Yesterday a bewildered theatreland in London was fighting back. The Society of London Theatre pointed to a new report, prepared at the London School of Economics, which shows West End theatre as a billion-pound business. In the first study to give a complete picture of the popularity and economic impact of theatre in the capital, it shows that 11.5 million seats were sold in the West End last year with a ticket revenue of £246m.

The report, written by Tony Travers, director of the Greater London Group at the LSE, also states that 41,000 jobs depend on West End theatre, theatregoers in London spent £433m on restaurants, hotels, transport and merchandise last year and London theatre's total economic impact in 1997 was £1.075m.

Nica Burns, production director of Stoll Moss Theatres, said last night: 'Please come back Ian McKellen. The West End would love to have you back and you would find that we have a flush of contemporary writing with such shows as *Popcorn* and *Closer*. It's a terrible misconception that most audiences are made up of tourists.'

The West End producer Thelma Holt, who is also the Cameron Mackintosh professor of contemporary theatre at Oxford University, said: 'I think British audiences are the best in the world. Last week three and a half hours of *Hamlet* in Japanese received rapturous applause at the Barbican. Of course there are a lot of foreigners in our audiences but I think that's an advantage. It's nice to have a cosmopolitan audience.'

Leading article,  
Review, page 3



West End theatres generate much revenue for the capital's economy and provide 41,000 jobs

## IS IAN MCKELLEN RIGHT? THE VIEW FROM THE STALLS

*The Independent* went to a performance of *Closer* at the Lyric Theatre, in Shaftesbury Avenue, London, to ask the attendees whether West End audiences actually appreciate what they're seeing on the stage.

**Craig Kennedy, 42, attorney, from San Francisco**

'I know absolutely nothing about this play. We bought tickets for it at a half-price ticket booth after flying in this morning. What this actor says is fine by me.'



**Sue Hall, 43, housewife, from Putney, London**

'I haven't been to the theatre for quite a long time - I just haven't arranged it for a while. I think it's probably right that there are a lot of tourists because they have the time to go.'

**Robert Southgate, 64, retired, from Warwickshire**

'I come to the theatre a lot. If he [Sir Ian McKellen] said he would rather play in the provinces I'd be delighted about it because I'm on the board of the Birmingham Rep.'



**Anne Tilley, 51, travel agent from Tunbridge Wells, Kent**

'I don't understand McKellen's remarks. An audience is an audience wherever they come from. It would be like me saying I won't have anyone booking a holiday who isn't English.'

**John Stone, 53, stockbroker, from Dagenham, Essex**

'I come to the theatre very much... probably once a fortnight. I've got a lot of respect for Ian McKellen but I think London is the place for theatre and culture.'



**Victoria Burke, 53, self-employed, from Tunbridge Wells, Kent**

'We've done all the big ones - *Miss Saigon*, *Cats*, *Les Mis*... It's very sad that Ian McKellen has taken that attitude. It's quite arrogant to say foreigners don't appreciate the theatre.'

**William Robertson, 34, yoga instructor from New Zealand**

'I don't go to the theatre regularly. I see movies more often. I found out about this from *Time Out*. I think a large proportion of people seeing plays in London aren't from England.'

**The Rev Geraldine James, 65, minister from Maryland, USA**

'I love the theatre, but I don't go much in the States - so this is a treat for me. To me [Sir Ian McKellen's] reading into the mind of his audience something that might not be true.'

## No hype, no glamour, but an ovation for Leicester

BY SHELDON MILLER

IT IS more than 100 miles off the West End tourist trail but Haymarket Theatre, Leicester, proves a big enough draw to attract a crowd of 300 on a Wednesday afternoon.

There is little in the way of hype or glamour. No one is offering tickets on the streets and no one is taking pictures outside the building for the folks back home. There is not a Japanese or an American in sight.

Here is a midweek mix of the elderly and students, with the odd suited professional, whose presence is conspicuous by the way they choose to sit alone, surrounded by empty seats. Time, space and relaxation is obviously what they want.

They are watching *The Rink*, a musical starring Linzi Hateley, better known for her recent performances in the world tour of *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. This play has been adapted from Terrence McNally's book, about a rink which a mother wants demolished for the memories it holds, but her daughter cherishes all it stands for.

Staff at the Haymarket are pleased with this afternoon's turnout. A crowd of 300 is a healthy midweek number in a theatre capacity of 750. Last year's audience figures, from March 1997 to March 1998, ran at 72 per cent of capacity; annual



The Haymarket Theatre, Leicester: 'Shows in London are far more profit-based'

Doug Marke/Page One

lottery grant to change that. Three sisters, Eileen Nutall, Betty Potter and Sheila Roberts, are discussing the first hour of performance. Mrs Roberts, 62, of East Goscote, is a regular theatre goer: 'I love musicals and this is right up my street,' she said. 'I've paid just £5 for a seat. What more do you want to know?'

Gwen Rowlings, 31, is a teacher from Peterborough, who has come here with a party of students studying GNVQ performing arts. 'The students are enjoying this just as much as any London show they have seen,' she said.

Sally Anne Tye, head of marketing and sales at the Haymarket, says there is more experimentation in the regions because, 'there is a really strong commitment to audience development and outreach work... In Leicester, 35 per cent of the city's population is Asian, so we reflect that with Asian theatre initiatives, that's just one strand of our work. The Haymarket has got a reputation of presenting a broad balance of performances and taking risk...'

'There's too much West End bias, everyone outside of London knows that. We are happy to get on with our own thing, minus the hype. There hasn't been an explosion in the provinces, theatre development has always been strong and our audiences know that.'

At the interval the crowd spills out into the foyer, left relatively untouched since the early Haymarket days of the Seventies. The carpet is a lurid mix of purple and pink zig-zags, but staff are working on a

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Britain's oldest working repertory theatre, the atmospheric 18th-century building has been home to top performers including Timothy West, Daniel Day-Lewis and Miranda Richardson.

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# Galleries 'fooled by conman in elaborate art fraud'

AN EXPERT conman masterminded an art fraud of such complexity that it took in some of Britain's leading galleries, collectors and experts, a court was told yesterday.

Sometimes styling himself professor, sometimes doctor, John Drewe allegedly created histories for non-existent works by famous modern artists, then paid a skilled painter £250 a time to create them. The court was told that John Myatt, a struggling artist, copied the styles of artists such as Ben

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Nicholson, Marc Chagall, Graham Sutherland and Alberto Giacometti, and that one of his creations fetched a price of more than £100,000.

Using old wood to make the frames and carefully-forged artists' signatures to perfect the paintings, Mr Drewe created elaborate stories to lure unknowing acquaintances to sell the paintings to galleries and collectors. Dealers they approached included Sotheby's

and Christie's, Southwark Crown Court was told.

While Mr Drewe, 50, of Reigate, Surrey, was driven primarily by a desire for money, his efforts over a 10-year-period suggested "an intellectual delight in fooling people", said John Bevan, QC, for the prosecution. His actions also showed contempt for the entire art world, the archives of which had been severely damaged. "He was a consummate and expert operator in his chosen field," Mr Bevan said.

At the heart of the case, the court was told, was Mr Drewe's ability to create histories or "provenances" which showed whether a painting was genuine. He even paid £20,000 to London's Tate Gallery, giving him access to museum archives which he was able to alter. "He realised that if works by famous 20th century artists could be faked and the archive material corrupted he could sell worthless paintings as originals for large sums of money," said Mr Bevan.

He went to great lengths to

create such provenances. At one point he entered into lengthy correspondence with an order of Roman Catholic priests - the Order of Servite Mary - to try and add to these histories. He also wrote to the families of the artists he was faking, hoping to glean extra information. They in turn became increasingly concerned as more and more faked paintings, attributed to their relations, flooded the market.

"As a nation we are fortunate to possess an invaluable collection of all kinds of works. The tiny minority are so well known that their authorship is unquestionable. The vast major-

ity, including paintings by modern artists, can, particularly if they are abstract works, be copied or imitated by a skilled painter."

The court was told that Mr Drewe then tricked other people into selling the faked works to collectors and galleries.

He told one "salesman" - who happened to be Jewish - that he was a member of a syndicate which was selling the paintings to fund a project which would destroy the revisionist theory of the Holocaust.

The salesman, Clive Bellman, saw it was a "worthy cause and was completely taken in".

Mr Drewe and an alleged accomplice, Daniel Stakes, 52, of Exeter, Devon, deny a charge of conspiracy to defraud. Mr Drewe also denies three charges of forgery, one of theft, one of using a false instrument and one of false accounting.

The court was told that the artist, John Myatt, 53, from Staffordshire, admitted his involvement.

The trial continues.

## Water prices to be cut by 10 per cent

THE GOVERNMENT signalled the end of the fat-cat years for the privatised water companies yesterday by telling them to cut prices by 10 per cent and spend £2.5bn on environmental improvements.

Cleaner rivers, beaches and drinking water must all be achieved while prices to the consumer are being cut, the companies were told by John Prescott, Secretary of State for the Environment, and his deputy Michael Meacher, who set the target as a framework for the companies' investment programmes in the first five years of the new millennium.

Meeting both elements would mean an end to the "bonanza" of directors' pay and shareholder dividends seen in recent years, they said, which had come about because water prices had been set too high.

The water companies said they could "face difficulties" in combining a price cut with increased investment, and share prices fell on the announcement.

The proposed programme of accelerated sewage treatment schemes, tighter drinking and bathing water standards and protection for a long list of

BY MICHAEL McCARTHY  
Environment Correspondent

wildlife sites threatened by sewage or water abstraction delighted environmental groups.

Mr Prescott said the 1988 water privatisation by the Tories had given away public assets and created ideal conditions for making a lot of money. "This is our first chance to get back some of that public investment. Most people will feel prices have been too high for five years and when connected to high profits, they want to see change." The Government believed a 10 per cent cut was possible, he said.

Spelling out the list of environmental improvements on which the Government was insisting, Mr Meacher said the discharge of raw sewage into the sea would be completely stopped. This would improve the quality of bathing water, enabling many more British beaches to meet the European Union's Blue Flag standard.

The spreading of untreated sewage sludge on land would be halted, and lead levels in drinking water would be cut by a massive programme of replacing old pipes. Added protection would also be given to sites of special scientific interest.

The Government's announcement came in the form of official guidance to the water regulator, Ian Batt, who is reviewing prices for the period 2000-2005. Mr Prescott said he had miscalculated when setting prices for the current five-year period, in 1994, allowing them to be too high.

Responding to the announcement, Brian Duckworth, chairman of Severn-Trent Water and also of the industry's umbrella body, Water UK, said: "We're happy to increase the pace of environmental improvement, but there's a cost attached. If a price cut hits our ability to invest, then we could face difficulties."

The companies were given a sharp warning by Lord De Ramsey, chairman of the Environment Agency, which will oversee the programme. He said: "We will make sure that the full programme of improvements is delivered by the companies by 2006. Slippage will not be acceptable."

Shares fall, page 18



The River Itchen at Eastleigh in Hampshire is one of the finest salmon chalk streams in the country, but there are concerns about the impact that raised levels of ammonia from sewage treatment works are having on the river's salmon population

John Voss

## Convicted paedophiles 'must disclose overseas travel plans'

BY JASON BENNETT  
Crime Correspondent

CONVICTED paedophiles will have to notify the police whenever they travel abroad and sex offenders visiting Britain will have to tell the authorities where they are staying, under plans being considered by the Home Office.

The issue of sex offenders who travel abroad was highlighted by the disclosure yesterday that a British-born paedophile who emigrated to Australia 27 years ago is being deported back to Britain.

The 57-year-old man, a former computer salesman in the state of Victoria, has been convicted of 36 sex offences against children in Australia. He now faces deportation and could be sent to Britain within weeks.

But under current British law, the man, known only as VZD for legal reasons, cannot be added to the new Sex Offenders' Register, which enables the authorities to keep track of them.

of concerns being raised by the police and others."

The case of VZD echoes that of the paedophiles Robert Oliver and Sidney Cooke, members of a violent sex gang, who were convicted under old legislation. Like them, he will not be covered by current sex offenders' legislation and will not be required to register or be supervised by the probation service.

The paedophile was first jailed in 1981 for attacks on two boys. He was given a six-year sentence, but served only two years and two months after agreeing to attend a special course to rehabilitate sex offenders. On the last day of the course, he admitted abusing a female relative, first when she was aged seven, for four years. Last year he was jailed for seven years.

Earlier this year, VZD was arrested after early release from prison to face a deportation order because he failed to apply for citizenship and committed his first crime within 10 years of arriving in the country. He is being held in a detention centre awaiting deportation, unless he lodges an appeal within three weeks.

The move was greeted with dismay by campaigners against child abuse in this country. Wendy Copeland, chairwoman of the White Ribbon Campaign, said: "We've got enough paedophiles already in this country draining our resources."

A Home Office spokesman said the paedophile could become the subject of a new Sex Offender Order, which comes into force at the end of the year. The orders can be placed on convicted sex offenders to restrict their movements, or impose other conditions in cases in which the police have evidence that they are likely to commit further crimes.

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## 'Observer' axes 17 journalists in cull

BY JANE ROBINS  
Media Correspondent

ROGER ALTON, the new editor of the ailing *Observer*, told 17 staff yesterday that they were being made redundant. The job losses include some of the newspaper's key figures, such as renowned columnist Sue Arnold and art critic William Feaver.

The newsroom has taken the brunt of the changes, being cut overnight by eight journalists. "I can't think of such a cull in Fleet Street ever," an insider said. "In the old days you might have seen a handful of people go out of a staff of 100, but this is a loss of one-fifth of all the journalists."

Journalists at the paper passed an union motion blaming the former editor, Will Hutton, for the drastic action, which comes after a collapse in circulation under his leadership.

## Elderly and disabled 'can't rely on State'

BY ANDREW GRICE  
Political Editor

THE ELDERLY and disabled will have to make more provision for themselves and rely less on the state, Alistair Darling, the Secretary of State for Social Security, said last night.

Mr Darling launched a crusade to "modernise" the welfare state and promised that the Government would start to unveil its long-awaited proposals in the next few weeks.

Mr Darling predicted that over the next 50 years, spending on health and education would rise in line with the nation's prosperity.

"As people make more provision for themselves, the share of welfare spend borne by the state in the form of benefits is likely to fall over the same period," he said.

While he promised to ensure



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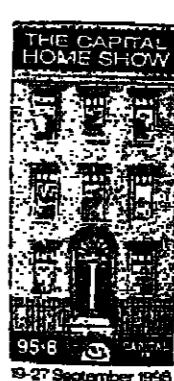
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# Beating of children to be outlawed

THE LAW is to be changed making it illegal for parents to beat their children, after a landmark European court judgement yesterday in favour of a boy who was caned by his stepfather.

Judges at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled that British law, under which the stepfather was initially acquitted, failed to protect the basic rights of the boy, who was nine at the time of the caning.

"Child A", who cannot be named for legal reasons, was awarded £10,000 in damages plus £20,000 in legal costs. But the ruling also means that ministers will have to amend the law to take account of the judgement. A consultation paper is expected by Christmas and one likely option is that hitting children with a stick or other object will be made illegal.

The case of Child A arose in 1993 when the boy was examined by a paediatrician who found a number of bruises apparently caused by beatings with a garden cane.

The child's stepfather was charged with causing him actual bodily harm and at the subsequent trial, in 1994, did not dispute caning the boy but argued that this amounted to "reasonable" punishment. The jury acquitted the stepfather on a majority verdict, but Child A, backed by his natural father, tested the law against the European Convention on Human Rights, of which the UK is a signatory.

In Strasbourg yesterday judges ruled that the treatment of Child A, who is now 14, was severe enough to reach the level prohibited by Article 3 of the Convention which states that "no one shall be subjected

BY STEPHEN CASTLE  
IN BRUSSELS

to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

The court ruled that English law, under which the prosecution must prove that an assault on a child is beyond the limits of reasonable punishment, did not provide sufficient protection.

The ruling, hailed by the boy's lawyers as "one of the biggest changes in child protection law for 130 years" im-

mediately provoked a political row, with the Conservative Party leader, William Hague, claiming that it takes "the nanny state too far".

Meanwhile, pressure groups stepped up calls for a ban on smacking which would bring the UK into line with eight other European countries. Anything less would produce confusion and result in contradictions, they argued.

While promising to change the law, the Government moved swiftly to distance itself from calls for an all-out ban on

smacking in the home. Paul Boateng, the Health minister, said: "Any case of serious violence against a child, and especially in this instance, [where] a young boy was being repeatedly and severely beaten at home, would horrify parents. There is no excuse for such behaviour and it is right and proper to condemn it."

"But this is nothing to do with the issue of smacking. The overwhelming majority of parents know the difference between smacking and beating."

But Mr Hague argued: "We have taken the nanny state too far when we have to have court rulings about what people can do with their own children in their own home on things like this."

"It's up to parents whether they want to smack their children. They don't need a European judge to tell them whether or not they're allowed to do that," he said.

Michael Gardner, litigation partner for Morgan Bruce, the legal firm that represented the boy, said: "I am delighted for Child A who fought this case not only on behalf of himself but to help other children."

"This is one of the biggest changes in child protection law for 130 years. We await the government legislation with interest - it is likely they will consider banning implements altogether."

Janet Convery, co-ordinator of the forum on children and violence at the National Children's Bureau, said: "We welcome the judgement and hope that the Government will take the opportunity to ban physical punishment and give children the same legal protection that adults have."



William Hague: Ruling takes nanny state too far



Pupils from St Peter and St Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School in South Shields view 'The Hand' by the artist David Gross. The 12ft structure, featuring a propeller in the palm of the hand and based on a design by the pupils, stands on the banks of the river Tyne and is meant to be a symbolic greeting to ships using the river. Raoul Dixon

## Freed nurse could be home 'in days'

BY CHRIS HAMILTON

A BRITISH nurse cleared of murdering her unfaithful husband after she shot him dead may be home from America "in days", her lawyer said yesterday.

Helen Cummings, 33, was found not guilty of the second-degree murder of her husband, Tyler Cummings, after a Florida jury decided she acted in self-defence. She is eight-and-a-half months pregnant with the couple's child.

Warner Olds, her lawyer, said Mrs Cummings was so desperate to go home to Preston, Lancashire, to see her one-year-old son that she may fly despite being near full term.

He said: "As far as I'm aware the pregnancy does not stop her from flying if she wants to. I don't know if she'll be back by the weekend, but it could be within days."

The maternity nurse admitted killing her husband and had been facing life imprisonment if found guilty, but the jury unanimously cleared her on the ninth day of her trial in Florida.

The court heard how she thought her husband would kill her after she confronted him with pictures of him naked with another woman.

The outcome was received with relief by her mother, Marion Billington, in Preston where she is looking after her daughter's son, Terry.

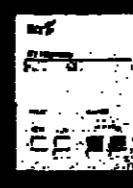
Mrs Billington said: "I have not spoken to Helen long enough to know what her plans are. She just cried, she wants to get back to see Terry and he wants to see her."

"It is the right decision, she had suffered enough."

During the trial Mrs Cummings told the court how she feared for her life and had even contemplated suicide when she shot her husband at their home in Fort Lauderdale on 14 February.

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# Setback for Ashdown on school trusts

PADDY ASHDOWN suffered an embarrassing defeat yesterday when party activists overwhelmingly voted against key proposals to shift power over schools to parents from local councillors, many of whom are Liberal Democrats.

But immediately after the defeat, Mr Ashdown vowed to continue to press for the controversial introduction of Neighbourhood School Trusts, which would consist of community-based groups such as parish councils.

As part of his campaign to change the education structure, he has asked Liverpool city council, which has a Liberal Democrat majority, to set up the independent trusts on a trial basis.

"The vote was disappointing. But we are determined to take this forward and stand by the broad principle with a longer campaign of consultation," he said.

Don Foster, the Liberal Democrat education spokesman, who drew up the proposals, said the policy was "far from dead".

"The underpinning principle of the trusts are the underpinning principle of Liberal

**EDUCATION**  
By SARAH SCHAEFER  
Political Correspondent

pect from the education service. Communities must be at the centre of everything we do."

Many party activists argued, however, that the proposals echoed the Conservative government's policy of allowing schools to opt out of local education authority control.

Mary Wane, from Westmorland and Lonsdale, was given rapturous applause when she warned against the changes.

"Please do not add any further disruption to our schools system by trying to impose a measure that is neither necessary nor desirable," she said.

Mrs Wane was scornful of suggestions that a vast "untapped reservoir" of people existed, just waiting to get involved, and argued that local communities were already involved in local schools in areas like hers.

Peter Downes, from Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, said the general reaction to the proposals had been to think: "What a barmy idea!"

And he added: "My fear is that it is so blatantly absurd that it will undermine our credibility and distract attention away from our other proposals."

"We want local authorities to set out what each and every citizen should be entitled to ex-



Lib Dem education spokesman Don Foster with Joanna Wallace, 3, and Daniel Miller, 4, at Tarnerland Nursery School, Brighton John Vos

## Anti-terror measures 'shocking'

**NORTHERN IRELAND**  
By SARAH SCHAEFER

in support of the emergency motion at the party's conference, denied there had been a policy change, stressing that the vote reaffirmed the Liberal Democrats' commitment to replace the existing Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Act with a comprehensive legislative package.

"It is irresponsible of the Tories to suggest otherwise," he said. The draconian measures, which were passed amid the terrorist atrocities of Omagh, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, make it easier to secure convictions of proscriptive members of terrorist organisations, such as the Real IRA, by allowing the evidence of senior police officers to be submitted to courts.

It also makes it a criminal offence to conspire to commit a criminal act abroad. Mr O'Keeffe, the Ulster-born son of Estonian refugees who fled Stalin's troops in the Second World War, said he spent eight years fighting for the independence of Estonia by attending demonstrations against the Soviet regime in Britain, a protest which would be illegal under the Bill.

He said that the parlia-

mentary party had voted for the legislation because it was needed to move forward the peace process in Northern Ireland.

However, he attacked the clauses of the Act dealing with the international dimension, saying: "We did the right thing and we made it clear that we opposed the clauses to combat international terrorism. We will not be held to the media circus of Tony Blair."

## Disarmament move fails

**DEFENCE**  
By COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

cluding nuclear weapons, following the Government's strategic defence review. This motion would pre-empt that review. It is not the way to make progress on an issue of such importance. The amendment should be rejected," he said.

Mr Campbell earlier told the conference the Liberal Democrats would carry out their own review of defence policy, in-

ject the unilateralist motion submitted by 42 representatives and the constituencies of Camborne and Redruth, and Oxford West and Abingdon.

"This is a very dangerous time to move away from trying to establish an international structure of order. I plead with Liberal Democrats to fight against this amendment," she said.

The conference gave its backing to the policy for "retaining a minimum nuclear deterrent as a weapon of last resort for the foreseeable future".

## Scarlet vision steps lightly into view

**THE SKETCH**



MICHAEL BROWN

to the nation's Liberal Democrats she reminded her people that they now represent Britain from John o' Groats to Land's End. She also talked about the "furthest most reaches of our isle" in much the same way as monarchs use the royal "we".

It was a good start to her promising two-year reign.

She gave her blessing to her prime minister-in-waiting, Paddy Ashdown, and paid tribute to his 10-year tenure as leader. She even called for 10 more years, but the polite applause at this suggestion was less than rapturous. Lady Maddock is more mummy and her soothing balm will be her chief asset in trying to control the excesses of her sometimes wayward and divided people.

Indeed the party had staged a peasants' revolt against its rulers, earlier in the day, when the conference debated education. The party's spokesman, in her acceptance speech

Don Foster, had come up with a policy proposal to replace education authorities with "neighbourhood schools trusts", which was supposed to vest "power in the people".

Sadly, the leadership had forgotten that education is the heartbeat of delegates. If they are not councillors they are invariably headmasters, teachers or education officers. Many have a vested interest in backing the National Union of Teachers against the likes of Chris Woodhead, who faced angry delegates at a packed fringe meeting the night before.

Now that the party has 46 MPs there are backbenchers as well as party spokesmen. So we had Jackie Ballad, the fierce and feisty MP for Taunton, speaking trenchantly against her own hierarchy. Mr Foster and Mr Ashdown, sitting glumly on the platform, both found it difficult to react. Shakes of their heads and the withholding of applause indicated that they were less than pleased.

Well, at least it shows that the party spin doctors are working their seductive magic as they spread their message that "one more heave and we really can make it".

Anyway, the leadership didn't make it yesterday and the peasants won the vote on a show of hands. A good day for party democracy if not for Liberal Democracy.

## CONFERENCE BRIEFS

### Call for ban on gene-altered food

**LIBERAL** Democrats yesterday called for a five-year ban on genetically modified (GM) food to allow more research into its impact on the environment.

The conference proposed an EU-wide moratorium and demanded clearer labelling of GM products. Among other environmental measures, delegates urged an Environmental Responsibility Act, requiring the inclusion of a "green chapter" in the Budget.

### Sex education needs a boost

**SEX EDUCATION** in schools should be taken more seriously to prevent unwanted teenage pregnancies, a former biology teacher and Liberal Democrat activist said yesterday.

Joan Walmsley, from Congleton, Cheshire, raised a laugh at the conference when she said pupils were being taught about sex by "pretty mechanical" teachers who have no formal training.

### Today's business

- Emergency motions on speeding up the process of dealing with asylum seekers, and the release from prison of Ruth Sandberg, detained in Italy for an alleged drug offence.
- Debate on home affairs policy, including an extra 6,000 police.
- A debate criticising the Government's decision to restrict legal aid.
- Keynote address by Paddy Ashdown.
- Conference closes

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University students tucking in to breakfast at the Merrion Thistle Hotel in Leeds

# Students check in at four-star hotel

STUDENTS ARRIVING for their first taste of academic life in Leeds are eschewing the rigours of shared digs and instead have found themselves booked into en-suite rooms in one of the city's plusher four-star hotels.

Thirty undergraduates from the University of Leeds are enjoying satellite television, crisp linen and a choice of full English breakfast or freshly baked croissants at the Merrion Thistle Hotel.

The students have been forced to live in the £100-a-night hotel because contractors have not finished work on their new accommodation. The university has negotiated a cut-price deal with the hotel, which is letting one-third of its rooms to students until further notice.

The undergraduates have taken readily to 24-hour room service and free in-house movies; one student even

BY GARY FINN  
charged a taxi to the university when late for lectures. There are also the all-important tea and coffee-making facilities and a trouser press so students can steer clear of ironing.

The move is the latest measure to cope with burgeoning student numbers. Previous years have seen universities and colleges around the country turning sports halls into soup kitchens with camp-beds, doubling up single rooms with bunk beds and booking students into empty council houses or hostels.

The hotel bill will be paid by the building company that is still renovating their rooms.

A Leeds University spokeswoman said: "They were told they would be staying in the hotel shortly after arriving at the Springfield Mount annexe of the Charles Morris hall of

residence. We are very, very disappointed that the contractors did not fulfil the terms of their contract and we have made our position very clear."

The university decided to put the students into the hotel "rather than having them spread across the city in bed and breakfasts with all the difficulties in communicating with them and bearing in mind some parents may not have looked too kindly on us if we put their sons and daughters in some run-down seedy place".

The move has gone down well with most of the students. Nick Woodrow, 18, from Buckinghamshire, who is studying civil engineering, said: "We have been quiet so far but I don't think the staff are very happy - in fact I think some are a bit put out because they are already paying for our education. The TV facilities are excellent and it's great to sit up

all night and watch the movies. It's better than home."

Hannah Stringer, 18, from Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, a first-year sports science and physiology student, said: "We don't really want to be seen as losing students just taking another freebie - but I could stay here all the time."

Still, there seems to be no pleasing some people. Simon Mudd, 18, a chemistry student from Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, said: "To be honest it's a bit of a hassle having to walk to and from the university. If we were in the halls, we would be on campus and able to walk straight into lectures."

"I'm not really complaining, though, because we are getting free food on a morning and I can recommend the full English breakfast. Being a first-year, though, it means I'm missing out on mingling with the rest of the freshers in the halls."

## Doctors want time limit on appointments

PATIENTS SHOULD not be forced to wait longer than seven days to see their family doctor, or two weeks to see a consultant about an urgent illness, doctors' leaders said yesterday.

Presidents from Britain's royal medical colleges and doctors representing the British Medical Association demanded that the Department of Health adopt four new waiting list targets to "empower patients".

The Government has pledged to bring down the waiting list by 100,000 during this Parliament.

But Professor Sir Norman Browne, chairman of the Joint Consultants Committee, said the real waiting list, and the measure of the efficiency of the NHS, should be the number of patients who have not been seen within appropriate time limits.

"The important thing we need to know is the number of patients we fail," he said.

Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, has written to Sir Norman, saying that the Government "fully recognises the importance of ensuring that decisions about treatment for patients on NHS waiting lists are on the basis of clinical need".

The committee's targets say that a wait for a non-urgent appointment with a GP should never be longer than seven days. At present the situation is "very variable" across the country, Sir Norman said.

### IN BRIEF

**Gladiator trial jury sent home**  
THE JURY in the trial of Michael Ahearne, the *Gladiators* star "Warrior", who is accused of acting as a go-between for a senior detective and a gangland boss, was sent home until this morning. Mr Ahearne and two others deny corruption and perverting the course of justice.

**Northern Ireland killers freed**  
THREE MEN convicted of double murder were among five life-sentence prisoners freed from jail in Northern Ireland yesterday under the Good Friday Agreement early release scheme. Two were loyalists and a third from the IRA.

**Doctor took biopsy by hand**  
A GYNAECOLOGIST accused of serious professional misconduct yesterday admitted pulling a sample from a patient's tumour with his hands. Consultant Rodney Ledward, 59, denies 25 misdemeanours.

**Children urged to exercise**  
CHILDREN AND young people need to exercise for one hour a day to enjoy better physical and mental health, the Health Education Authority said in a report yesterday. Regular exercise also enhances self-esteem.

**Lottery show 'screened too early'**  
THE BBC's *National Lottery Big Ticket* encouraged young people to gamble illegally, the Broadcasting Standards Commission said yesterday. The watchdog said it should not have been screened at 7pm when children were watching.

**MILES KINGTON**

*'Psychologists now believe that a person cursed with a name like Somerset Maugham or Kingsley Amis has to escape into writing'*

— THE THURSDAY REVIEW, PAGE 2 →

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# Nato gathers strike force for Kosovo

AFTER MONTHS of dithering, Nato took its first steps yesterday towards assembling a multi-national force to carry out air strikes to halt President Slobodan Milosevic's ever fiercer offensive against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo.

The apparent new-found determination to get to grips with what is already a colossal humanitarian disaster came as Serb forces continued to pound Kosovo's central Drenica region, stronghold of the secessionist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Serb units captured and set fire to more than a dozen villages, putting to flight a further 20,000 Albanian civilians.

Last night the United Nations Security Council was due to approve a resolution drafted by Britain and France demanding a ceasefire and the opening of negotiations for a political solution to the crisis, failing which unspecified "further action and additional measures" would be taken to restore peace.

Though the wording stops well short of an explicit authorisation of force, Nato plan-

By RUPERT CORNWELL

ple homeless, a humanitarian crisis this winter is already assured. Evidence is growing too of atrocities, with assurances from Belgrade - echoing those of the Bosnian Serbs in the Bosnian war - that the situation had been "stabilised" and that refugees were now returning to their homes.

In an effort to make the threat believable, US officials at Nato have given an unusually detailed idea of what form the strikes could take, starting with cruise missile attacks against Serb communications facilities and depots in Kosovo.

Ripe. The Serbs have the upper hand, enabling Mr Milosevic to negotiate, if he so chooses, from a position of strength.

But nothing is certain. Jeremy Greenstock, the British ambassador to the UN, admitted: "There's no agreement among anyone about next steps." Russia remains hostile to the use of force. The US and Britain, however, have let it be known they will act if necessary, with or without the approval of the Russians.



A family of refugees from Kosovo in the northern Albanian town of Shkodra yesterday

# Clerics start to lose their grip in Iran

By ROBERT FISK  
Middle East Correspondent

hajerani's statement in Beirut - but does he have the support of the Iranian intelligence services and the powerful bonyads, which originally put a price on Mr Rushdie's head?

The security services appear to be loyal to the President - it is they who have been supplying the Taliban's enemies with arms and who have been continuing the battle inside Afghanistan against the men whom Mr Khatami himself calls "criminal fanatics".

True, a lone assassin could endanger Iran's new foreign policy by obeying the *fatwa* and thus projecting the conservative clerics once again, but the irony is that while Rushdie's death sentence remains a critical issue in Britain, it is of virtually no importance in Tehran.

The battle between Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and Mr Khatami's supporters is being fought in the press where the magazine *Rah-e No* (New Way) has carried an article by the late Grand Ayatollah Abolqassem Mousavi Khatami that seemed to question whether Iran's government should have a supreme spiritual leader at all.

*Rah-e No* earlier published an essay by the pro-Khatami dissident Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, who said Ayatollah Khamenei, as supreme leader, should supervise state affairs - but without paramount power.

The articles appeared in the prelude to the 23 October elections for the Assembly of Experts which can name - and dismiss - Iran's supreme spiritual leader. *Rah-e No* has now paid the price for exercising such freedom of speech: the authorities have temporarily suspended publication after Ayatollah Khamenei privately expressed his displeasure.

The Supreme Leader may indeed be enthusiastic for a war against the Taliban although President Khatami, by embarking on serious political negotiations at the United Nations to avoid a conflict, has effectively prevented any military offensive. Ayatollah Khamenei is on the defensive.

Meanwhile, Iran - so long the target of Western condemnation for its alleged "backwardness" and fundamentalism - now finds itself in the position of condemning the Taliban's pseudo-Islamic laws against women and their ferocious punishments - knowing full well that the Taliban is a paid creature of Saudi Arabia, Washington's favourite ally in the Gulf.

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## Presidential crisis: Congress prepares for impeachment hearing as Bill Clinton wins new friends in the ghettos

# Republicans reject talk of early deal

SENIOR REPUBLICANS rejected an early deal with President Clinton to pre-empt impeachment hearings in the Monica Lewinsky affair yesterday, but allowed that he should have a chance to put his case before a final decision was taken.

The rebuff came amid pledges from both sides to use the Watergate impeachment hearings as a model for further action and strong words from

BY MARY DEJEVSKY  
in Washington

a succession of elder statesmen blaming Mr Clinton for diminishing the office of president.

Signalling that overtures from the White House had so far fallen on deaf ears, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, said that the House had to finish its own inquiries before

any decision was made.

"For anybody to talk about doing anything before we finish the investigative process simply puts the cart before the horse," he said. "There's an awful lot of evidence that hasn't been gathered yet."

The other evidence relates to the continuing investigations being conducted by the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, into the Whitewater land

deal in Arkansas and two earlier cases relating to the Clinton White House — the dismissal of the travel office staff (Travelgate) and the transfer to the White House of confidential FBI files (Filegate).

But Mr Gingrich did hold out the prospect of a hearing for Mr Clinton before the judiciary committee, conceding: "The President has not had an opportunity to present his case."

Mr Gingrich was reporting on a meeting of leaders of the House and its judiciary committee held to discuss a possible timetable for instituting impeachment hearings.

While one of the stated purposes of yesterday's meeting was also to restore a spirit of "bipartisanship", the two sides emerged as far apart as ever: The two senior Democrats at the meeting — the House minority

leader, Dick Gephardt, and the senior Democrat on the judiciary committee, John Conyers — refused to join Mr Gingrich's briefing and held a separate press conference to lambaste their Republican colleagues for — as they saw it — needlessly trying to draw out the process and not heeding Democrats' strictures about the release of the Lewinsky documents.

Mr Gephardt said that he

and Mr Conyers had requested that the current judiciary committee investigation could and should be concluded "in the next 30 days or so". The committee meets again today when it will consider how many more of the documents — another 16 boxes — in the Lewinsky investigation should be made public.

A number of elder statesmen, meanwhile, weighed into the discussion about the affair

The former president George Bush told an interviewer that while the presidency was "bigger than one person", he feared the office had been damaged.

The former president Jimmy Carter said he had "deplored and been deeply embarrassed about" Mr Clinton's relationship with Ms Lewinsky. He forecast that the Senate would not produce the two-thirds majority necessary for impeachment.

## Blacks in LA plan protest for Clinton

BY ANDREW GUMBEL  
in Los Angeles

JUST WHEN Bill Clinton might have thought he was running out of friends, the black community of Los Angeles — at the epicentre of rioting against authority in 1992 — has offered to stage a rally of support when he flies into town for a fund-raising dinner this weekend.

Minority groups, and blacks in particular, have always been an important constituency for Mr Clinton. Throughout the Monica Lewinsky scandal, blacks have consistently polled as the group most supportive of the embattled President — partly because they see parallels between their own treatment at the hands of the police and judiciary and Ken Starr's dogged pursuit of the President.

And the city that exploded in fury at the police beating of Rodney King, and then chose to acquit OJ Simpson because the jury did not trust the police evidence, wants to support him.

James Mays, a black community leader in Watts, south central Los Angeles, said: "We want him to have a spontaneous response from the broad mosaic of residents in South Central, not just blacks but Hispanics, Asians, and many others. We want him to look at the young people and adults who really believe in him and let him know he is moving in the right direction."

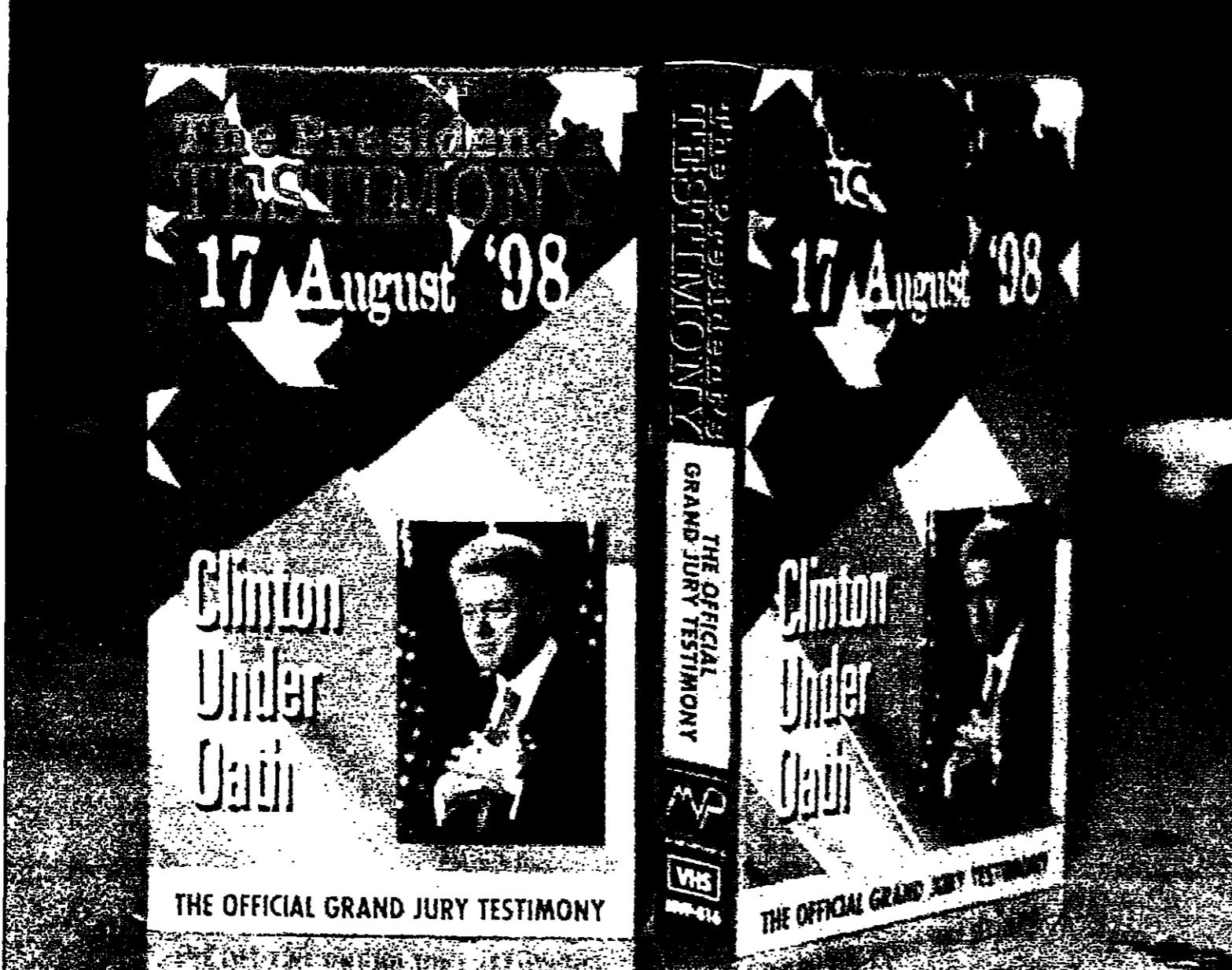
Community action has

the Los Angeles chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, this is because any wrongdoing is clearly outweighed by the vehemence of the backlash against him.

"What we're seeing is the ideology of a dominant culture that wants to get you at all costs," she said. "We've had similar experiences — how they keep after you until they find your weak point. This is oppressive pressure that we can relate to," she said.

Mr Clinton also enjoys strong support among minority groups for his policies — surprising since he pushed through deep cuts in welfare before his 1996 re-election. "We recognise he needed to do that to get re-elected and we appreciate his efforts to stand up for social programmes, education and health in spite of the welfare reforms," Dr Washington added.

If Mr Clinton can keep minorities on his side and persuade them to turn out to vote in November, it could also allay fears among his fellow Democrats that they are in for a scandal-driven rout. "We are the most vocal, some would say the noisiest, ethnic group," said Dr Mays. "We have the tradition of civil rights and we know better than anyone how to sing 'We Shall Overcome'."



Copies of the video 'The President's Testimony' ready for shipment from California

## Kohl hints at 'grand coalition' after poll

BY IMRE KARACS  
in Bonn

ALMOST INSEPARABLE in the polls, the visible distinctions between Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his challenger faded further yesterday as Germans were confronted with the prospect of a "grand coalition" after this Sunday's vote.

In a televised interview last night, Mr Kohl conceded for the first time that the two biggest parties might be condemned to govern together. "I consider a grand coalition to be possible in principle, because democrats have to be able to form coalitions with each other," the Chancellor said.

In the glacial world of German politics, this admission of political reality was treated as a sensation. Christian Democrat spin doctors scrambled to issue "clarifications", urging editors to take a closer look at the rest of the interview, particularly the part where Mr Kohl declares: "I will not be the leader of a grand coalition."

Until now, the Chancellor's

as junior partner to the Christian Democrats.

With such a precedent, Mr Kohl is understandably not keen to repeat the experience. After the last "grand coalition", the Christian Democrats were out of power for 13 years.

But this time the prospect of such a government is seen as the logical outcome of the blurring of the differences between the two great parties. After six months of campaigning, the voters can be excused for feeling a little confused.

With Chancellor Kohl, at least they know where they stand. After 16 years of "stability and peace", the incumbent is promising four more. At the hustings, Mr Kohl runs through his achievements, drops a few promises about trying to bring down unemployment and reform taxation and plays on his image as the trusted pilot in stormy seas.

The Social Democrats, on the other hand, speak with

forked tongues. Leftists, such as the party chairman Oskar Lafontaine, hark back to the values of traditional socialism: safe jobs, safe pensions and lots of child benefits.

This is the mantra that Mr Schröder adopted for his rallies, whilst his real message, about the need for "structural reforms" in the welfare state and jobs market, is being delivered surreptitiously.

The differences between the Kohl product and the Schröder vision boil down to style. Mr Schröder, 54, plays pop and jazz at his rallies, while Mr Kohl's crowds are warmed up by oompah bands.

The real choice is between change, offered by Mr Schröder with a nudge and a wink, and permanence, which the Chancellor has written all over him. That much Germans understand, but how those contradictions could be resolved in a joint government, nobody can fathom.



Helmut Kohl is made up for an interview yesterday

## Desperate Chancellor enlists his wife's support

BY IMRE KARACS

Hannelore Kohl, often mockingly referred to as the Barbie of the Palatinate because of her hairstyle and priggish demeanour, has suddenly been discovered to have views on matters other than cooking or her favourite charity.

Whatever German voters might be thinking about the wisdom of choosing a 68-year-old leader for another term, Mrs Kohl is certain that retirement is not on the cards.

"My husband as a pensioner? Inconceivable," she told *Zeit-Magazin* in one of a series

of interviews that hit the newsstands yesterday. "He has shaped history, brought progress to the country and Europe and for good reasons would like to further his influence."

The woman behind Europe's most powerful man has no fear of the family fish tank being

thrown out of the Chancellery in the near future. "He is a political long-distance runner," Mrs Kohl explains. "He will run on the final bend."

Hannelore Kohl, a fluent speaker of English and French, is normally happy to play the *Hausfrau* and takes pains to maintain a low political profile.

She is also said to be a very private person. Yet here she is indulging in a bit of gossip about her husband's favourite dishes, and reminiscing about the time the Gorbachev popped in for dinner.

Could she, wonder the Social Democrats, be the last throw of the re-elect Kohl campaign?



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## Chinese to curb migrant births

By TERESA POOLE  
in Peking

FOR THE past decade, China's army of 100 million migrant rural workers has manned the production lines of a boom economy. But now it is being blamed for boosting output in an unwanted sector - illicit babies born outside the strict family planning rules.

Under a regulation announced yesterday, migrant workers must from 1 January 1993 carry a new certificate stating their "marriage and reproductive status", while employers and landlords of transient labourers will be expected to help to enforce birth control measures.

China's controversial family planning regime was introduced at a time when most of the population stayed put in home towns and villages, and was carefully monitored by the local contraceptive cadres. But economic reform and a relaxation of social controls brought the freedom for unemployed peasants to seek casual work in the cities. There they fall outside the strict pregnancy quota system.

In Shanghai, migrant workers make up less than an eighth of the permanent population, but the rate of unplanned births by transients is 12 times that of Shanghai residents. The state family planning minister, Zhang Weiqing, this week said uncontrolled births among the floating population had created "great pressure" on the government's birth-control efforts.

For rural families, migration to a city can be an opportunity to outwit regulations which, in most rural areas, limit couples to two, well-spaced children. Li Caiyun, for instance, came to Peking from Sichuan province in February with his wife who was three months pregnant, without permission. Back in his home village there would have been enormous pressure to have an abortion. In Peking, Mr Li worked on a building site until last month when the baby was due and it was too late for the authorities to act.

The new regulation on family planning administration of the transient population is designed to crack down on such migrant pregnancies, but implementation may prove difficult. The rule states that the local government where the migrant worker is temporarily living must take responsibility for implementing birth control restrictions. Couples found to have fabricated, sold or bought bogus birth-control certificates will be fined up to 1,000 yuan (£700), it said.



Kim Beazley with his daughter Rachel (left), wife Susie (second left), and daughters Jessica (centre) and Hannah

Steve Holland/AP

## Kim Beazley's big idea – spend, spend, spend

By ROBERT MILLIKEN  
in Brisbane

KIM BEAZLEY, Australia's opposition leader, launched his attempt to return the Australian Labor Party to power yesterday with an old-fashioned party formula: spend, spend, spend.

Formerly opening his campaign for the election on 3 October at a party rally in Queensland, Mr Beazley promised to spend billions on schemes that he claimed would bring unemployment down from 8 to 5 per cent by 2004.

Gone was the "vision thing" of New Labor in Australia, an obsession with Asia, multiculturalism and the arts. Mr Beazley instead offered a back-to-basics Labor approach of growth through public spending.

If Mr Beazley does lead Labor to victory, it will be one of the biggest upsets in Australian politics. He has enormous odds to overcome. After a record 13-year rule, Labor lost by a landslide in 1996 to the conservative Liberal-National parties led by John Howard. Labor must win 27 seats to regain a

majority in the 148-seat House of Representatives.

It must win most of these in the populous eastern states of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, where the election will be decided. In Queensland, Labor holds only two of the state's 27 seats, which is why Mr Beazley is spending much campaign time in the "sunshine state", or the "deep north", rather than back home in Western Australia, where he is fighting to hold his own marginal constituency near Perth.

Then there is the problem of his own public image. Although he has been in politics for 18 years, Australians know little about him. Newspaper cartoons play on one aspect: his obesity. He is jolly and amicable, but questions have always been asked about whether he has sufficient "killer instinct" to be prime minister. Mr Howard tried to exploit this early in the campaign when he suggested

that Mr Beazley did not have the "ticker" (stamina) to be the country's leader.

Yet there are signs that he could defy the odds. In the last three opinion polls, Labor was ahead of the coalition by enough to win the election. In a television debate between the two leaders on 13 September, Mr Beazley easily outperformed the pedestrian Mr Howard.

Mr Beazley comes from a political dynasty in Perth. His father, Kim senior, an MP for 30 years, was very much Old Labor. He once famously thundered to a party conference: "When I joined the Labor Party, it contained the cream of the working class. But as I look about me now, all I see are the dregs of the middle class."

His son is very much middle-class, New Labor. Kim junior was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford in the 1970s, where he met Tony Blair. They have remained friends. Mr Blair wrote in a forward to a recent biography of Mr Beazley, by Peter Fitz-Simons: "Kim was always the

guy who stood out – in every way! Early on, even at university, he was streets ahead in terms of political savvy and intellect."

When Australian Labor reinvented itself under Bob Hawke and Paul Keating as a party of small government and the free market, Mr Beazley was part of the inner team. He became Minister for Defence, which he once said was the height of his ambitions.

When Mr Blair became Labour leader in Britain, he sought advice from his old Australian mate on the key question of how a social democratic party could ditch its old precepts and become a creature of a market-driven era.

The irony is that Mr Beazley is now doing his best to distance himself from that same revolution: "The free market does many things well," he told yesterday's party rally. "But not all the things that communities need done."

He has talked a lot in this campaign of "eating humble pie" and learning from mis-

takes of the past. In an attempt to win back old Labor supporters, he promised yesterday to spend almost A\$800 (£500) on schools, hospitals, job schemes, roads and railways, especially in declining rural areas where unemployment is high.

About the only policy from the Keating era that Mr Beazley has promised to see through is a republic. He wants an Australian head of state to open the Olympics in Sydney in 2000.

Mr Beazley's support is growing among Australians, but whether it will gather enough momentum in the campaign's final 10 days to smash Mr Howard's record parliamentary majority is another matter.

The Labor leader told his biographer that when he visited Tony Blair at Chequers last year, Mr Blair said to him: "Kim, I cannot believe that I'm Prime Minister of Britain." If he wins in Australia on 3 October, Kim Beazley will have a similar feeling.

## FRONTLINE

VLASENICA, BOSNIA

LIKE MOST young people of Vlasenica, a small town in eastern Bosnia, Ranka Kraljevic, is unapologetic about being a racist. "It's not that I hate Muslims," the demure 30-year-old Bosnian Serb explains with disarmingly candour. "It's just that I'll never trust them again."

Ranka has ambitions to work in the forestry industry but there is no work for her in Vlasenica, where unemployment runs at 50 per cent.

She is a "Displaced Person" from the town of Olovo, 30km away. About 80 Serb families made the move during Bosnia's vicious ethnic war between Muslims, Serbs and Croats.

Olovo is in Muslim-held territory these days. Conversely Vlasenica used to be a mostly Muslim town as well.

Not one of the 8,000 Muslims who lived here until 1992 lives here now. As elsewhere in the Republic of Srpska, the Bosnian Serb entity, the mosque in the town centre has become a patch of grass.

One day at the start of the war Vlasenica's Serbs heard rumours of a Muslim-on-Serb atrocity in the next door village. "I saw two women and three babies skewered on a spit. They had been cooked over a fire by their neighbours. I couldn't eat for a month after this."

Now, when she wants to go shopping in Banja Luka,

the main city in the Republic of Srpska, she does not take the direct road through Muslim territory, but goes the long way round via Brcko, a seven-hour trip, instead of four.

Bosnian Serbs such as Ranka look at the West's defence of Vlasenica's municipal make-up and feel paranoid and cheated in equal measure. "You Westerners think all Serbs are bad but you don't know anything," she says.

Before the election earlier this month, Western organisers optimistically predicted that the Muslims would turn up by the busload to vote in their old municipalities, as they are entitled to, under the 1995 peace deal that ended the war. No one in Vlasenica is surprised that only a handful did so.



by the make-up of the town council, 40 per cent of which is still controlled by the Muslims. The councillors mostly live over the country's internal border in Tuzla, and come by bus, sometimes under an armed escort of Western peace-keepers to vote on behalf of a community that no longer exists.

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JAMES FERGUSON

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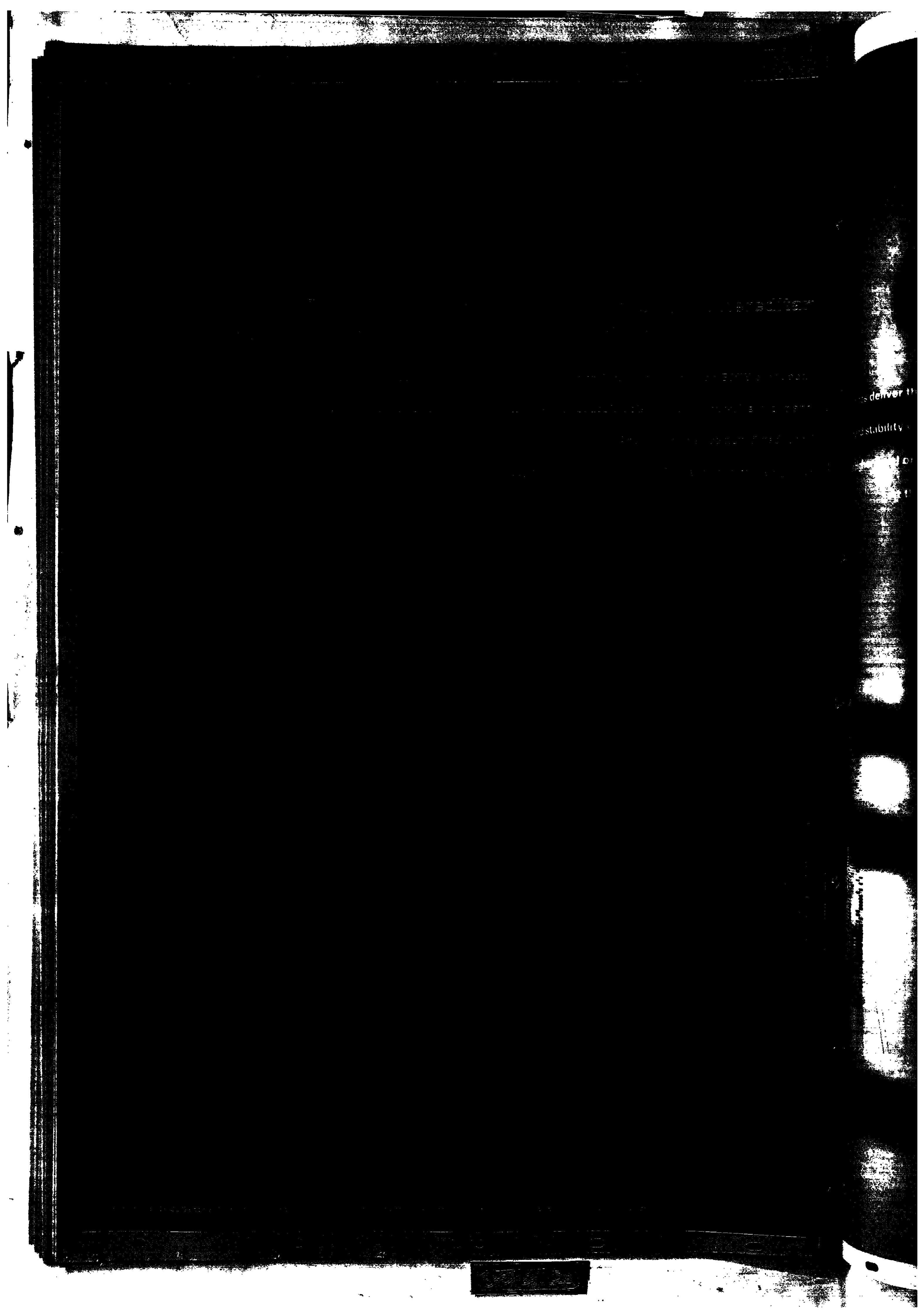
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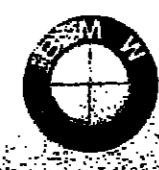
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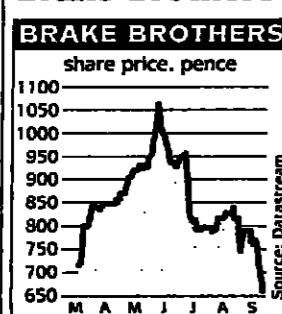
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# BUSINESS

## BRIEFING

**MFI chairman to retire next year**  
DEREK HUNT, chairman of the struggling MFI Furniture retailer, yesterday announced his intention to retire from the company next year, though MFI said he was not bowing to pressure from institutional investors. "It has for some time been my plan to retire at the age of 60," Mr Hunt told shareholders at MFI's annual meeting, adding that he does not intend to seek re-election next year.

MFI has been criticised by investors for the company's poor performance, which has seen MFI's shares fall from 131p last year to just 37p, down 0.5p yesterday. In a trading statement MFI said UK retail sales in the first 21 weeks of the current financial year were 10 per cent below the same period last year.

**Brake Brothers shares plunge**  
**BRAKE BROTHERS**  
  
Source: Datstream

SHARES IN Brake Brothers, the market-leading food distributor, plunged yesterday by 15 per cent as the company said that catering was facing a "temporary slowdown". Over £48m was wiped from the company's value as its chairman, Frank Brake, said he was "cautious, although not pessimistic" about the full year. Shares dropped from 747.5p to 635.5p, in spite of a 27 per cent rise in first-half pre-tax profits to £13.7m.

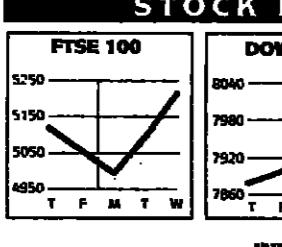
*Investment, page 23*

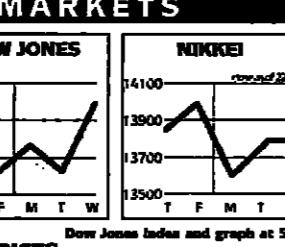
### Liffe to go electronic earlier

LIFFE, LONDON'S international financial and futures exchange, has announced plans to bring forward electronic trading. Liffe, which is facing aggressive competition from other European futures exchanges, will start trading futures electronically from 12 April next year, rather than at the end of the second quarter.

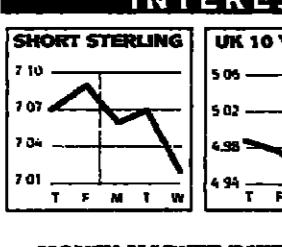
Gilt futures will be the first futures contract to be traded on Liffe Connect, the new system, followed by index futures and bond futures. Short-term interest rate futures (STIR) contracts will be traded electronically from early July. As previously announced, electronic trading of individual equity options will start on November 30.

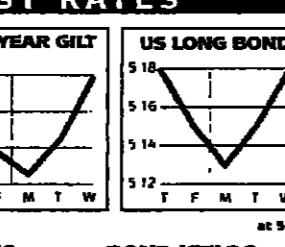
Brian Williamson, Liffe's recently appointed chairman, said: "Liffe has responded to the commercial demands of our customers by accelerating the introduction of Liffe Connect".

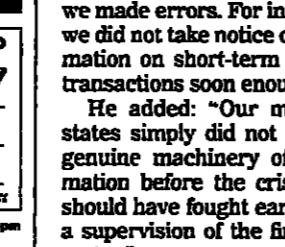
**STOCK MARKETS**  
**FTSE 100**  
  
Source: Datstream

**INDICES**  
**DOW JONES**  
  
Source: Datstream

**NIKKEI**  
  
Source: Datstream

**INTEREST RATES**  
**SHORT STERLING**  
  
Source: Datstream

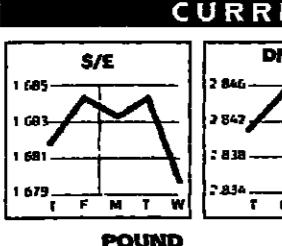
**UK 10 YEAR GILT**  
  
Source: Datstream

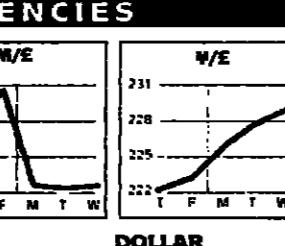
**US LONG BOND**  
  
Source: Datstream

**MONEY MARKET RATES**  
**BOND YIELDS**  

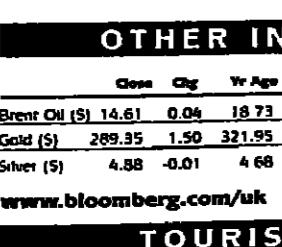
Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	7.42	0.14	7.06	-0.44	5.05	-1.53	4.71	-1.85
US	5.50	-0.22	5.25	-0.71	4.74	5.18		
Japan	0.42	-0.16	0.46	-0.18	0.92	-1.24	1.45	-1.37
Germany	3.48	0.17	3.59	-0.18	3.97	-1.57	4.89	-1.39

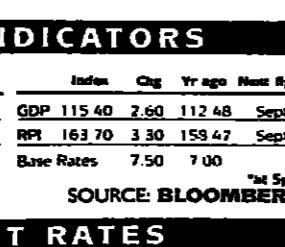
  
Source: Bloomberg

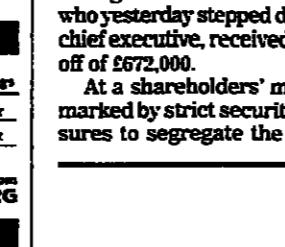
**CURRENCIES**  
**S/E**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**D/E**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**W/E**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**OTHER INDICATORS**  
**POUND**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**DOLLAR**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**Yen**  
  
Source: Bloomberg

**TOURIST RATES**  

Country	1997	1998
Brent Crude (\$)	14.61	18.73
Gold (\$)	289.35	315.21
Silver (\$)	4.88	-0.01

  
Source: Bloomberg

## Water shares hit by £8.5bn clean-up threat

SHARES IN water companies fell sharply yesterday after the Government warned that it expected them to invest £1.5bn on environmental clean-up programmes while still making "substantial" cuts in the average water bill.

Michael Meacher, the environment minister, suggested there was scope for a one-off cut in water charges of 10 per cent when the new five-year pricing

formula is introduced from 2000.

Shares across the sector fell by more than 3 per cent as the City took fright that the twin squeeze of higher environmental costs and lower prices might be worse than feared. Anglian closed 29p down at 838p, while Severn Trent ended 41p lower at 163p and Hyder, owner of Welsh Water, lost 41p to 938.5p.

Robert Miller-Bakewell, water analyst for Merrill Lynch Global Securities, said: "This is an overdue reminder that there is a regulatory review in the background and that water is not just a steady utility stock that you can turn to when the market is turbulent."

The £1.5bn figure is £2bn more than the water industry has already budgeted to spend between 2000 and 2005 improv-

ing drinking water and bathing water standards and cleaning up rivers and coastal sewage discharges.

Another analyst said the Government was trying to face both ways, by emphasising its green agenda at the same time as demanding big price reductions. He added that although the £1.5bn figure was large, a lot would depend on how it was spread among the

water companies and how much the water regulator, Ian Byatt, allowed to be passed on to customers.

Andrew Stone of Daiwa Europe said: "You are seeing the political context which is always likely to be pro-consumer. Now we have to convert the political into the economic and that is up to Ofwat [the water regulator]."

Mr Byatt will unveil his ini-

tial proposals on water bills next month when he publishes "Prospects for Prices".

However, final price limits for each water company will not be set until November next year. The new price controls take effect from April, 2000.

Water charges have risen by 36 per cent in real terms since the industry was privatised in 1989. The average bill now stands at £245.

## Go-ahead for £1.9bn power takeover

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

competition in the generating market.

It will have to settle for a lower figure than that but it will still permit three or four new players to enter the market. Negotiations over how much plant National Power must dispose of are continuing but it will not be less than 4,000 megawatts.

In his second major competition decision in as many days, Peter Mandelson, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, is today expected to agree not to refer the PowerGen deal to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission subject to undertakings. These are likely to include conditions relating to ring-fencing and cross-subsidies, as well as the requirement to dispose of stations.

The move will come as a boost to the coal industry, which was further bolstered by news yesterday that Eastern Group is to invest £100m on environmental clean-up kit for its West Burton station in Nottinghamshire to allow the plant to continue burning British coal.

Mr Mandelson's ruling could also clear the way for a spate of further deals involving vertical integration between electricity generators and suppliers.

Southern Electric and Scottish Hydro-Electric have already announced plans for a £2bn merger, and the nuclear generator, British Energy, is one of the two front-runners to take over London Electricity.

The electricity regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild, had wanted the two big fossil-fuel generators, National Power and PowerGen, to dispose of half their coal-fired stations - equivalent to 10,000 megawatts of coal-fired capacity to increase

competition in the generating market.

When PowerGen announced the East Midlands deal in June, it said that it had already received 10 approaches to buy generating capacity. The Ferrybridge plant in Yorkshire is one of the two stations likely to be sold and PowerGen believes it will raise £500m.

The merger will create a combined group with sales of £4.1bn and pre-tax profits of £32m. It is expected to yield savings of £30m a year.

Ed Wallis, the PowerGen chairman, took a risk that the deal would not be blocked by the MMC by making the takeover unconditional. PowerGen completed the purchase and handed over the money to East Midlands' US owners, Dominion Resources, two months ago.

The sale of two power stations will reduce PowerGen's portfolio to 10,000 megawatts, of which 6,000 will be coal fired. National Power has about 16,000 megawatts of capacity.

## French Connection profits from ads

FRENCH CONNECTION, the fashion chain led by Stephen Marks, is continuing to enjoy a boost from its controversial f.c.u.k advertising campaign,

writes Nigel Cope. The campaign has helped the company sell 100,000 T-shirts and pushed half-year profits 16 per cent higher to £3.5m. Like

for-like sales were 11.2 per cent higher than the same period last year.

The group plans to open three new French Connec-

tion stores and one new Nicole Farhi outlet in the second half.

The shares were unchanged at 310p.

## IMF chief admits errors in Asian and Russian crises

BY LEA PATERSON

was a need for internal change.

Speaking at the launch of the Bank's annual report, a Bank representative said officials had for some time been aware of the need for reform, and had already started on a series of internal shake-ups. Proposals for overhauling the Bank and the IMF are expected to be discussed at length at the forthcoming annual meetings of the two institutions.

He added: "Our member states simply did not have a genuine machinery of information before the crisis. We should have fought earlier for a supervision of the financial sector."

Mr Camdessus' comments came as the World Bank - whose policies have also come under fire - admitted there

hopes of an early easing in US interest rates. Analysts speculated that a cut could come as soon as next Tuesday when the Federal Reserve will meet for its regular rate-setting meeting.

The FTSE 100 rose for the second day, closing up 11.4 points at 5214.7. At lunchtime in New York, the Dow Jones was up 11.2 points at 8013.2.

World stock markets tumbled last week after Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, appeared to rule out a co-ordinated cut in global interest rates.

However, there are still hopes of a cut in US rates and markets were waiting anxiously for hints of Mr Greenspan's next move as he spoke last

night to the US Congress about the turmoil in world markets.

Nick Stamenkovic, chief European economist at Bank Austria Credit Anstalt Futures, said: "Tuesday's meeting will be a close call. Greenspan is an internationalist, and could pursue other FOMC [the committee that determines US rates] members to cut."

Oil prices were also spurred yesterday on talk of an emergency summit of oil industry leaders in Italy next week. November Brent crude hit an intra-day high of \$14.73, but fell back after oil companies played down the talk, saying the forthcoming meeting was an "unexceptional" exchange of industry views.

## Biotech rejects calls to halt legal action

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

pack from participants, investors will be given the board a 40-minute grilling over the action against Dr Millar, the former head of clinical research who was dismissed after voicing doubts over two of the company's star drugs to one institution.

The demands came as it emerged that Dr Keith McCullagh, Dr Millar's main rival who yesterday stepped down as chief executive, received a payoff of £672,000.

At a shareholders' meeting marked by strict security measures to segregate the media

staf, and Dr McCullagh, caused a collapse in British Biotech's share price and two investigations by US and UK stock market regulators. The company is suing Dr Millar in the High Court for breach of contract.

John Williams, one shareholder asked the board: "In view of the bad PR, can you tell me exactly what you hope to gain from suing Dr Millar?"

Another investor said: "The share price is a disaster. The litigation with Dr Millar is some-

thing we should not be bothered with. It is a small blip. How much would it cost to settle?"

The chairman, John Raisman, replied: "There are very strong grounds for the actions and possibly substantial damages to be recovered."

However, Mr Raisman, who is set to step down at the end of the month, held out the possibility that the company could settle the case at a later stage. He added: "It will clearly have to be on realistic terms. I don't think any realistic terms have

been proposed."

Dr Millar is understood to have asked for around £90,000 to settle the case. The company said that Dr McCullagh's leaving package will include one year's salary, worth £240,000, plus a one-off payment of £242,000 to his pension fund.

He will be replaced by Elliott Goldstein, a former executive at SmithKline Beecham. Christopher Hampson, chairman of building materials group RMC, will take over as chairman.

SHARE PRICES closed higher, as gains on other markets overshadowed concern about the political situation in Italy. The Mibtel closed up 279 points at 19,193, while the Milb30 rose 540 to 28,544.

The Communist Refoundation party, whose votes ensure Prime Minister Romano Prodi a lower house majority, is undecided over whether to back the 1999 budget and could pull its support altogether, which could force Mr Prodi to resign. The budget will be presented for cabinet approval tomorrow.

## AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

### LONDON

TALK OF lower interest rates as well as renewed takeover speculation lifted Footsie 111.4 points to 5,214.7 in brisk trading. But supporting shares had another poor season with the mid cap and small cap indices giving ground.

GRE

# Water companies escape a soaking

HERE'S A fascinating irony. Since Labour came to power in May of last year, committed to curbing the supposed excesses of the "fat cat" water industry, water shares have been among the best performers in the stock market. This has been particularly the case since 17 July, when the onset of the bear market brought the defensive qualities of water and electricity fully into their own. But actually, these shares have been pretty consistent outperformers from the day Labour was elected. Is this a question, then, of Labour's bark being worse than its bite? There may be an element of that.

The windfall profits tax could have been a good deal harder on the water companies than it was, while so far the sort of numbers being talked about for higher environmental spending and lower bills are well within City expectations.

It may be that Ian Byatt, the water regulator, has a nasty shock in store for investors when he publishes his price review next month, but if so, he's keeping it very close to his chest. The 10 per cent one-off reduction suggested yesterday by Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, was no worse than



the City was expecting. Nor were his numbers for extra capital spending. Of the additional £2.5bn announced, only £4bn is real additional spending.

In any case, as far as the City is concerned, the more spending the merrier. Not only are water companies allowed under the conditions of their licences to earn a defined rate of return on all capital spending, but they also have the opportunity to beat that rate through efficiency savings. The more spending, then, the less scope there is for reductions in bills and the more there is for efficiency savings.

Water shares suffered a bit yesterday after Mr Meacher's an-

nouncement, but this was hardly the sort of stuff to melt confidence in a sector which, set against what's going on in many other industries, seems to be a haven of safety and reliability. So much for "regulatory risk", the catchphrase attached to these stocks before Labour came to power. With the pound and interest rates so high, and the world economy teetering on the brink of recession, industries with regulatory risk seem the place to be.

The risk of oppressive regulation may in any case be something of an illusion. The lesson of British Gas, which famously accused the regulator of the biggest smash and grab raid in history, is that these utilities are capable of taking the very worst the regulator can throw at them and still come up smelling of roses. There is continued and considerable scope for efficiency gains in water companies, and that's before the wave of consolidation and merger activity being planned for this sector in the City.

Mr Byatt is going to have to raid shareholders' capital on a truly heroic scale to stop these companies continuing to deliver the real increases in dividends investors in the water industry have come to ex-

pect. He is bound to be harsh, but on past form, he's not going to be that harsh.

## Supermarkets

THE BIG GUYS of the supermarket sector get it their own way most of the time, but they are certainly being punched around a bit at the moment. Less than a month after the Office of Fair Trading launched a full-scale investigation into the sector, along comes another OFT report, this time into buying power.

Its central thesis is this: that while huge buying muscle can be in consumers' interests if those gains are passed on to consumers in a competitive environment, the likelihood of such benevolence reduces sharply when competitors achieve a stranglehold on their market.

The killer punch is the final paragraph, which suggests that profits are bounding ahead too fast to sustain the argument that the buying power of the big chains operates in the consumer's interest, as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and OFT have maintained up until now.

The implication is clear – that

"something must be done". The more difficult issue is what. The supermarket sector is not a regulated monopoly and any attempt at legislating for it would almost certainly be counter-productive. America has the Robinson-Patman Act, which seeks to prohibit suppliers from offering preferential terms to selected buyers, thus limiting the effect of enhanced buying power. Unfortunately, forcing larger supermarkets to pay the same as the local corner shop is likely to lead to higher food prices, not lower ones.

Any attempt to force the supermarket to lower their prices would be wrong in theory and impossible in practice. So perhaps all the Government can do is hope market developments come to its rescue. On this front, the advent of the euro should work miracles. The effect should be both to increase the pool of competitors and to flatten out prices across the single European market. Consumers would not tolerate food prices that were blatantly higher in the UK than elsewhere.

The gradual increase in home shopping may also help increase competition by drawing in rivals from other countries not saddled with the high cost base of a store portfolio.

But the times and the odds moved badly against him. The last time the MMC investigated the bookmaking business, when Mecca bid for William Hill in 1989, it concluded that it was a series of local markets. Nine years on it has swapped horses and decided that changes in technology have made it a national market, meaning that to reduce the big three to the big two is a non-starter. Mr George now has to conduct a fire sale of Coral in a failing market, knowing that the most obvious bidders are already ruled out. That must reduce his chances of recouping his original stake and hanging onto his job.

The Ladbroke chief executive must be looking enviously at Ed Wallis of PowerGen. He also took a punt – paying £1.90m for a regional electricity company in advance of regulatory clearance. Ed's bet looks to have paid off, even if he is parting company with more power stations than planned.

Sadly, neither decision casts much light on Mr Mandelson's attitude towards mergers, since he is in favour of handing over all decision-making powers in this area to an independent competition authority.

News Analysis: Betting chain buyout is deemed anti-competitive



Coral Bookmakers, Covent Garden, yesterday. Ladbroke has been given six months to sell the 891 Coral shops

## Fresh inquiry call on pensions mis-selling

BY ANDREW VERITY

CITY REGULATORS yesterday came under renewed pressure to launch a full-scale investigation of pension top-up contracts as fresh evidence emerged that tens of thousands of them had been mis-sold.

More than half of pension scheme managers believe the top-up contracts, known as tree-standing additional voluntary contributions (FSAVCs), had been mis-sold to members of employers' schemes, according to a survey yesterday.

Bacon & Woodrow, the leading actuary who commissioned the survey, yesterday said there was no doubt that many of the policies had been mis-sold and called for a full-scale review of the products.

Additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) are pension top-

up policies sold to people who want to supplement the pension available from their employer. All employers are obliged to offer them if they already provide a pension scheme.

But concern has grown in recent years that financial advisers have persuaded thousands of employees to buy FSAVCs offered by insurance companies. It is feared that many employees have bought them without realising they are paying hefty commission and charges not levied by their employer.

Andy Cox, AVC expert at B&W, said: "There is no disputing that many pension scheme members who have taken out FSAVCs would have been financially better off with AVCS."

The Personal Investment Authority, in charge of regulating the sale of FSAVCs, has for years resisted a full review of the products despite mounting predictions that they could amount to a second pension mis-selling scandal. The PIA has launched a preliminary investigation into the sale of the products to decide whether a full-scale review is necessary. No findings have so far been made public.

## DTI bars Ladbroke from buying Coral

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

1,500 shops and 22 per cent of the market. If the deal had gone ahead, more than one in three bets placed outside racecourses would have been controlled by Ladbroke, according to MMC estimates.

Second, the merger of Coral into Ladbroke would have left only two national bookmakers, Ladbroke and William Hill, in the £1bn-a-year UK betting market.

Mr Mandelson said that Ladbroke's proposal to sell up to 301 Coral shops to Tote, the state-owned bookmaker plus the disposal of both the Coral telephone-betting service and a couple of greyhound tracks, would have done little to enhance competition. He concluded that "the adverse effects of the takeover could only be remedied by requiring Lad-

merging the Coral shops into its existing chain. The Coral shops made a £17.1m contribution to the group's profit in the first half of the year.

Peter George, Ladbroke chief executive, said the group was "very disappointed" with the DTI's decision. He claimed that the company had received "supportive initial guidance" from the Office of Fair Trading at the time of the deal.

However, an OFT source said yesterday it had advised Ladbroke that the merger would only be cleared if the MMC buy the same criteria with which it judged the 1988 merger of William Hill and Mecca.

One of the key planks of the MMC's case against the deal was that the bookmaking world had changed since 1988 and that the William Hill/Mecca yardsticks no longer applied. In

merging with the big boys and whose share of the market has been declining since the William Hill/Mecca deal.

The plight of smaller bookmakers was also exacerbated by the National Lottery's arrival in 1994. According to government figures, the number of bets has declined by about 10 per cent since the introduction of the weekly lottery draw. This caused a sharp fall in the industry's profitability and accelerated the rate of closure of betting shops, to the bigger players' advantage.

The MMC and the DTI also rejected Ladbroke's argument that the Coral buy complied with "the quarter-mile rule", one of the cornerstones of the MMC's clearance of the William Hill acquisition. The rule requires a bookmaker who buys a shop within a 440-yard radius of one of its existing outlets to have at least one competitor in the same area.

However, the MMC demonstrated that technological changes, the influence of television and a relaxation of gambling taxes have transformed betting from a local activity, centred on the neighbourhood bookie, into a UK-wide business where competition is measured on national terms.

"This evolution of the industry over recent years, and the differing structural effects of the two mergers, mean that the Ladbroke/Coral and Mecca/William Hill mergers are not directly comparable," the DTI concluded.

On the financial side, the decision to force Ladbroke to sell Coral sparked a search for potential buyers. Shares in Ladbroke rose 17.5p to 22p after it reported receiving several approaches from "various capitalists and other parties".

A spokesman said the company was hopeful of achieving a "good price", although he suggested this might fall short of the £363m paid to Bass given the current economic uncertainty.

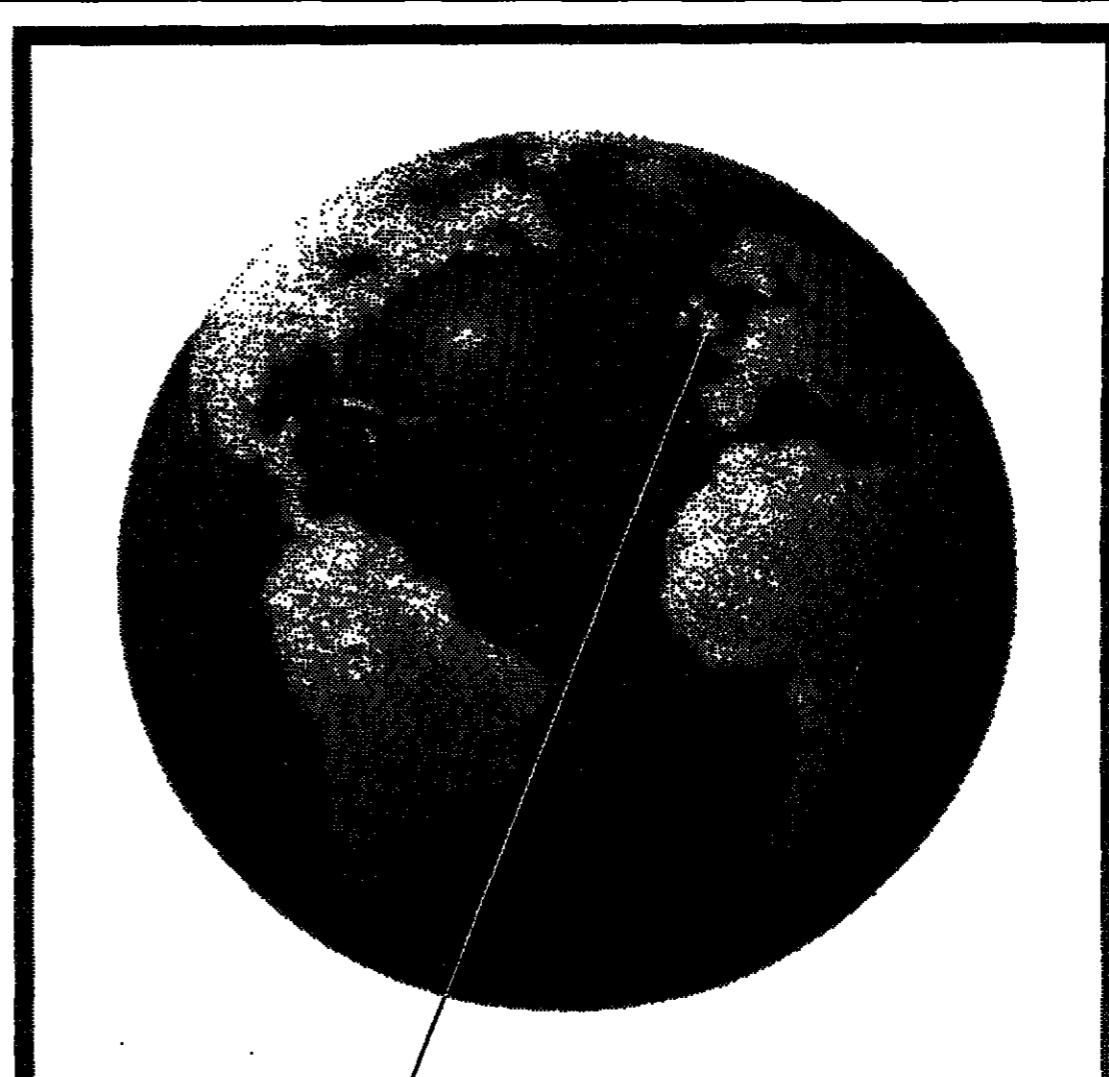
broke to divest the "whole" of Coral. He recommended that Coral be sold to a single buyer, but added that a break-up of the group could be acceptable if it led to a "more robust competitive environment".

Tote will now return to Coral the 133 outlets it bought for £45m earlier this year, as the deal was conditional on the approval of the merger.

Mr Mandelson's decision is a blow to Ladbroke, which had hoped to cut costs by up to £15m and to achieve economies of scale in its betting division by

an in-depth view of betting market trends, the MMC argued that the market has shrunk over the past 10 years, with a 12 per cent fall in the number of betting shops.

At the same time, concentration increased to unprecedented levels. According to the MMC (see table), the five largest bookmakers controlled 70 per cent of total betting turnover in 1997, compared with 65 per cent in 1988. The remaining 30 per cent is scattered among a myriad of independent operators which are too small to compete



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# IMF braced for further Russian blow

THE INTERNATIONAL financial community is bracing itself for another fierce blow from Russia - the likelihood that it will default or, at best, restructure some \$200bn of foreign currency debt.

Analysts predict that Moscow will be unable to find \$192bn due next year, threatening to drive Russia's financial crisis to new depths and deepen its isolation.

"The position at present looks like another default or restructuring," said a western diplomatic source. "They have got themselves into a very, very deep hole."

Although Russia has promised to honour its foreign debts, its credibility has been badly undermined by its decision in August to freeze \$40bn of ruble-denominated domestic debt, gridlocking the banking system and leaving foreign investors high and dry.

In more normal circumstances, Russia could borrow enough funds to roll over \$19bn of interest and principle payments due next year; it is not an exceptionally large sum for a large country.

But a severe loss of international confidence, com-

BY PHIL REEVES  
in Moscow

pounded by its steepening economic decline, has diminished its chances of raising the money.

Neither the International Monetary Fund nor the World Bank is likely to look favourably on the idea of bailing out Moscow again, particularly given the return to power of Gorbachev-era free-market sceptics.

Michel Camdessus, the International Monetary Fund's managing director, said yesterday that the fund - which has a team in Moscow monitoring the future of its now discredited \$23bn rescue package - was ready to support Russia as long as Moscow presented a "credible reform plan".

But there are few signs that Russia can satisfy that criteria. "The choice is between defaulting and rescheduling," Thierry Mallerat, an economist with Russia's Alfa Capital told the Moscow Times newspaper. "Russia is totally broke and I don't see how the situation could improve."

Another default would repeat an unfortunate pattern that

stretches back to the 1917 revolution, when the Bolsheviks refused to honour billions of dollars-worth of tsarist-era bonds.

Western commercial banks have yet to forgive Russia for restructuring \$25bn of Soviet-era debt to the London Club.

The archpriest of Russia's market economics, Anatoly Chubais, believes that Russia had no choice but to turn to the IMF to meet its foreign debts, even this year.

An agreement with the IMF would be difficult. But without one, Moscow would resort to using currency reserves, spawning an even more intense attack on the ruble.



Alun Cathecart (right), chairman and chief executive of Avis Europe, the car rental group, and David Maloney, group finance director. Avis is buying 4,000 of the two-seater Swatchmobile cars, a joint venture between Mercedes-Benz and the watchmaker Swatch. Eye Catchers Press.

Investment, page 23

## Software boost for East Coast line

RAIL PASSENGERS on the East Coast Mainline should suffer fewer delays in the future, following a multi-million pound investment in state-of-the-art software to improve signalling, writes Michael Harrison.

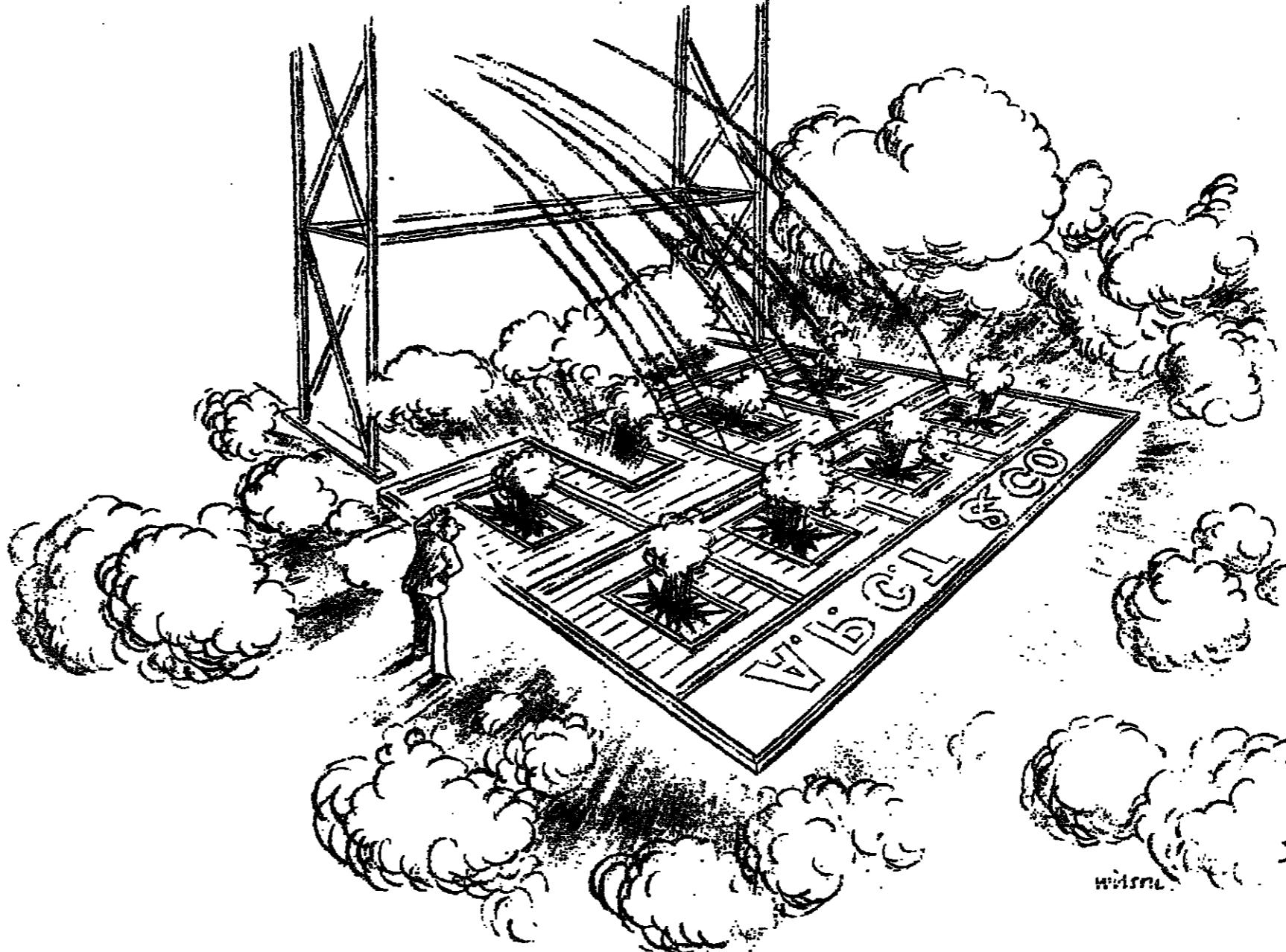
AEA Technology has been awarded a contract by the infrastructure maintenance company Jarvis Rail to install the software at three control centres along the line.

The equipment improves the routing and tracking of trains, enabling controllers to give priority to high-speed passenger trains rather than slower freight trains.

The software will be installed over the next three months at three electronic control centres in York and on Tyneside.

As well as reducing train delays, the equipment should also save Railtrack money since it is liable to pay penalties for hold-ups caused by problems with the rail infrastructure.

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### IN BRIEF

#### Barratt attacks government over economic and planning policies

BARRATT, BRITAIN'S second largest housebuilder, yesterday became the latest construction group to attack the government's economic and planning policies. Frank Eaton, the chairman, said the government's management of the economy was "seriously undermining consumer confidence". He added that authorities failed to implement planning policies to meet the UK's housing needs. Barratt reported a 33 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profit to a record £23.3m.

#### Derivative risks in the open

UK COMPANIES are for the first time having to disclose a range of information about the risks from derivatives and other financial instruments, as a result of today's publication of a new accounting standard. The Accounting Standards Board says Financial Reporting Standard 13 is necessary because derivatives often do not appear in accounts, yet can quickly give rise to assets or, more seriously, liabilities.

#### Dawson suffers bigger loss

LOSSES AT Dawson International deepened to £23.6m in the six months to 4 July from a £4.2m loss the year earlier, the textile company revealed yesterday. The maker of Pringle clothing blamed the loss on Asia's economic crisis and the strong pound. Chairman Derek Finlay said problems had been caused by the strength of sterling, the full impact of the Asian economic crisis and fashion trends away from heavy woolen yarns and knitwear.

Dawson reduced its workforce by 24 per cent, which represents an £8m reduction in operating costs for the full financial year. The shares closed off 5p at 76.5p, down from a 12-month peak of 76.5p.

#### Summer slowdown for brewer

THE REGIONAL brewer and pub operator Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries yesterday blamed "testing market conditions" for a slowdown in sales in the 47 weeks to 22 August, down from a 4.7 per cent increase in the first half of the year to 2.5 per cent. In a trading update ahead of its annual results, finance director Ralph Findlay said: "As far as brewers are concerned, summer did not happen." The shares gained 19p to 396p.

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# Blue chips leave the small fry behind

BLUE CHIPS once again displayed a clean pair of heels to their smaller brethren. As Footsie's recovery continued the stock market's supporting shares endured another nervous, despairing session.

There were stories that leading fund managers were dumping second-line stocks. Mercury Asset Management, part of Merrill Lynch, was said to have unloaded supporting shares, particularly chemicals and engineers.

The contrast in the fortunes of blue chips and the under-card was dramatic. Footsie jumped 11.4 to 5,214.7 as the mid cap index lost 8.4 to 4,582.6 and the small cap dropped 3.4 to 2,032.6, yet another low for the year.

The feeling that blue chips had been hit too hard in the downward spiral from the July peak, plus takeover hopes and a growing expectation that interest rate cuts will soon appear, spurred leaders.

But there was unease amid the euphoria. NatWest Stockbrokers' head of research, Jeremy Balstone, warned that shares could be hit by deflationary pressures next year. He suggested a cut of up to 40 per cent could materialise. Still, in the mean-

## MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

time, he expects Footsie will rebound to around 5,800 by the end of the year.

Waters, regarded as safe havens in the market slide, took a bath on the US 55 Government demand for price cuts and improvements to the quality of services provided. Severn Trent fell 40p to 1,062p and United Utilities 32p to 908p.

There seemed to be a heavy flow of profit downgradings. Bass, last week by a profits warning, was again flat on suggestions that analysts, after talks with the group, were preparing to pull forecasts even

lower than the 1840m or so they alighted on after the Bass caution.

Storehouse slumped 24.5p to 185p. BT Alex Brown did the damage. The investment house cut its estimates by 27m to £127m for next year, by £12m to £130m for next year and by £12.5m to £150m for the following year.

Still the takeover speculation industry continued to thrive. GRE, up 19.5p to 277.5p, was again seen as an Allied Zurich target. The feeling that bid action could break out among the depressed insurers lifted Royal & Sun Alliance 46.5p to 553p and CGU 59p to 93.6p. Tuesday's other bid candidate Reed International, rose a further 15.5p to 550p.

Granada's investment presentation provided inspiration, with the shares up 51p to 777p. Lehman Brothers said buy, repeating its 950p

target.

Marks & Spencer edged forward 4p to 446p as ABN Amro said buy and Next improved 25.25p to 399.25p after chief executive David Jones picked up 100,000 shares at 370.5p and director Simon Wolfson 270,000 at 370.5p.

ABN was also behind a 26p jump

to 377p by British Aerospace, and Cable & Wireless scored from CSEB buy advice, gaining 35p to 553p.

Ladbrokes was unfazed by the block on its Coral betting shop acquisition, cantering 17.75p to 222p.

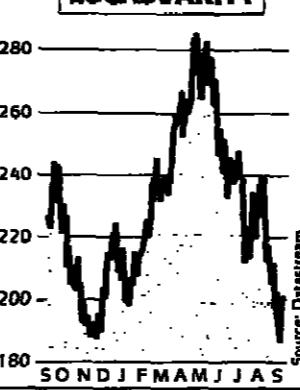
NATWEST Enterprise Trust, a venture capital group where National Westminster Bank is the biggest shareholder, jumped 30.5p to 304.5p, a peak, as possible predators made their presence known. At the end of June the company's net assets were around 376p a share. The trust said a number of parties had shown interest. Because of a conflict of interest, ABN Amro is no longer the company's stockbroker, replaced by West Merchant Bank.

Enerts put on 52.5p to 775p in a further reflection of the Henderson Crookshank buy recommendation.

LucasVarity, the engineer, moved ahead 5p to 200p. There is growing unease about its proposal to move its domicile to the US. John Buckland at

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT

share price, pence



Source: Datastream

unruffled by the Office of Fair Trading-sponsored probe. Asda, at one time up 13.5p, ended 3p higher at 174.5p and Tesco gained 2.75p to 171.75p. Safeway, Somerfield and J Sainsbury ended a little lower.

ZERGO, an electronic information group, firms 10p to 265p, a long way from the 476.5p peak hit when information technology shares enjoyed the top of their bonanza this year. The group's shares were firm on HSBC's decision to start producing research on the company. No doubt it was merely a coincidence that on Monday Zergo clinched a £300,000 contract with Midland Bank, part of HSBC.

Darwin says the reasons put forward for the switch are at best tenuous, and the protestations about increasing shareholder value are dubious.

Centrica rose 5p to 111.5p on talk that the Italians were planning to import gas from the company. Oils strengthened on a firmer crude price and hopes of a world oil summit. Enterprise Oil gained 19.5p to 390p.

Supermarkets were largely

The day's worst performer was Infobank, off 77.5p to 42.5p. It blew a fuse after what was unquestionably a profits warning by the electronic systems and software group. The shares were floated at 125p in February last year.

Euro Sales Finance, providing finance to small and medium sized companies, slipped 7.5p to 280p after duly reporting profits of £1.3m against £563,000 and disclosing plans to move from AIM to a full listing.

Memory Corporation's run continued with the shares moving ahead 6.5p to 28p. They have climbed from 15p on Monday, when BancBoston Robertson Stephens put a 50p target on the shares.

Emerald Energy held at 25p. It made encouraging noises about its Gigante drill in Colombia, saying a positive outcome is expected in two weeks. Talk in the market suggests that a 1.2 billion barrel field has been discovered, which could be worth 25p an Emerald share.

SEQ VOLUME: 943.4 million  
SEQ TRADES: 57,121  
GILT INDEX: 111.01 -0.55

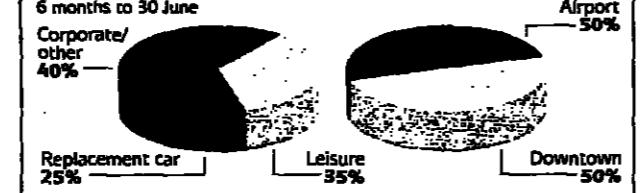
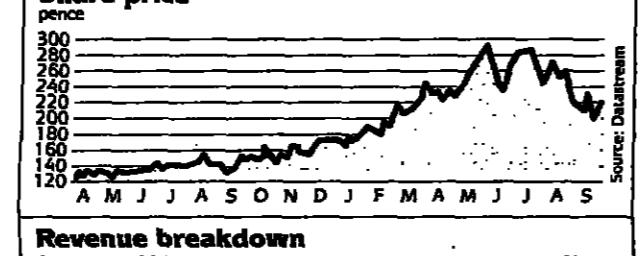
# Economic gloom fails to dent Avis car rentals

## INVESTMENT

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

### AVIS EUROPE: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £1.28bn, share price 223p (22p)					
full year to 28 Feb - half year to 30 Jun					
Trading record 1996 1997 1998 1997 1998					
Turnover (£m)	477.00	512.00	509.00	254.00	252.00
Pre-tax profits (£m)	26.10	57.00	75.60	22.30	36.00
Earnings per share (p)	8.60	10.10	3.20	4.60	
Dividends per share (p)	-	-	3.75	-	1.50
Share price (pence)	200	250	200	150	100
Revenue breakdown	6 months to 30 June				
Corporate/other 40%					
Replacement car 25%					
Airport 30%					
Leisure 35%					
Downtown 50%					



### Warning from Bowthorpe

YOU HAVE to feel for Nick Brookes. The chief executive of Bowthorpe gets almost unanimous approval for the changes he has made at the electronics group. He's reorganised the business into five global divisions, cut costs, beefed up spending on capital equipment and research and development, and shared more information with the City.

Until the beginning of June everything was fine. Then investors got the jitters and the shares slipped to almost half their 50p high. They shed another 34p to 235.5p yesterday as analysts downgraded their full-year profit forecasts to 94p.

At first glance, this looks harsh. In the six months to June Bowthorpe managed an 18 per cent jump in operating profits on an 11 per cent increase in sales. Although this

included the benefit of some acquisitions the underlying profit growth rate was still a healthy 11 per cent.

The problem was Bowthorpe's warning that its growth in the second half would slow. Although the group's Network Systems division, which serves the fast-moving telecom sector, is expanding quickly, other divisions are not so robust. Profits in the Cable Management division were flat.

That said, forecast profit growth of almost 10 per cent is not bad in a sector where many companies - buffeted by the Asian downturn and the strong pound - are struggling to grow at all. Mr Brookes also has the financial firepower to expand in Asia before the export-led recovery he expects in the region begins.

Certainly, the company has suffered some blows since its shares peaked at more than £10 earlier this year. One problem stemmed from trouble with new computer systems. Teething troubles had knock-on effects in the food services distribution operation, causing a one-off hit of £2m for extra labour. Bad weather and dwindling consumer confidence meant fewer people ate out.

But there's no reason to assume this will last forever. Puritan Maid, the multi-temperature distribution service, is no longer plagued by giant losses, while Brake's French division is thriving.

The shares may have been overvalued. But at yesterday's close they trade on an undemanding 16 times forecast full-year earnings. She sounds like a tough cookie.

There are risks. Exposure to the personal computer cycle could upset short-term earnings, while there is the prospect of further gloom about the an-

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## SPORT

Cricket: As a select few get ready for an Ashes tour, the game's rank and file must look elsewhere to make ends meet

# Players prepare for the big freeze

THE COMING of misty autumn evenings signals, among other things, the end of another English cricket season, a time of sadness and reflection for the game's devotees and the final surrender of the sports pages to the great god, football.

For players bound for foreign shores with the England Test squad and the other representative teams, the bringing down of one curtain merely beckons the raising of another. For the vast majority peddling their talents in the county game, however, the prospect looms of six months in

which their principal employer deletes them from the payroll.

Unlike the footballers with whom, for a couple of months at least, they are afforded equal status by the image makers - and breakers - of the national press, cricketers are paid only when they work. And, more to the point, they are paid at rates for a season that some of their better-heeled footballing brothers would expect to apply by the week.

A Test player might earn £40,000 - perhaps even more - for his six months, but that category rep-

resents a tiny proportion of the workforce. At the other end of the scale a junior professional might pick up as little as £7,000-8,000. The average senior probably collects around £25,000, although this is not necessarily a firm rule: the minimum for a second-year capped player - one who has served an unspecified "apprenticeship" and proved his worth - is much lower, at £20,800.

Hence the need for most bread-and-butter county players, without whom there would be no bedrock to underpin Test cricket, to find gain-

BY JON  
CULLEY

ful employment during the winter. Yet the current situation is considered to be substantially better than that which existed only a few years ago.

"Things have improved," Nottinghamshire's 1998 beneficiary, the 35-year-old Kevin Evans, said. "When the television deal with Sky

was negotiated, the Professional Cricketers' Association won a share of the fee for the players, which gave us a pay rise of about £3,000.

"Minimum levels were established, meaning a capped player can at least be sure of what some people would regard as a decent income. Above that it is down to the individual and what he can negotiate for himself. And it depends on where you play because some counties pay better than others."

What constitutes a "decent" income varies, of course, from one in-

dividual to another; depending on his circumstances. "We are better paid," Evans' team-mate, Paul Johnson, said. "But at the same time your overheads have risen; you might have moved house and taken on a bigger mortgage. So you need to earn something in the winter to pay the bills."

Johnson has driven lorries and even killed cattle in an abattoir during his 18 years at Trent Bridge. But the range of employment possibilities has shrunk.

"In the past, a committee member might have found a player a job

in his company but these days businesses are less able to do such things," Nottinghamshire's chief executive, Mark Arthur, said.

"At Trent Bridge we employ seven or eight players on our cricket in the community scheme and we use contacts overseas - we have established links with New Zealand, for example - to help players find clubs abroad.

"We cannot afford to go Lancashire's way and put people on 12-month contracts but we do our best to help and I'm happy to say some of our staff will need to draw the dole."

A WINTER'S TALE: HOW THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE XI WHO CLOSED THE SEASON AGAINST GLOUCESTERSHIRE LAST WEEK WILL SPEND THE COMING MONTHS



CHRIS TOLLEY  
(ALL-ROUNDER)

Aged 30; born Kidderminster; Notts since 1996.

"I HAVE a degree in sports science and while I was with Worcestershire I spent six winters teaching, five of them at Chase High School in Malvern, but I don't have the contacts around Nottingham. I've always been interested in fitness and rehabilitation. Last winter I trained as a sports massage therapist and I'm hoping to work in the rehab unit currently being developed in our new grandstand complex. I may go back to teaching at some stage but I would always want to do something that makes use of the degree. This winter I will be doing some coaching for the club, too. On top of that I'm also getting married."

NOEL GIBBONS  
(BATSMAN)

Aged 21; born Pretoria, South Africa; Notts from school, debut 1995.

"IN PAST winters I have been away, once on an England Under-19 tour and a couple of times to South Africa, but this winter I plan to do a lot of studying. I'm doing a four-year course in business studies which will hopefully lead to a BA and I need to catch up on what I have missed since last April, which will involve going to lectures at Nottingham University and working at home. I'm hoping to gain some practical experience working in sales and marketing for a computer firm in Birmingham. A cricket career can last a season or 15 years and it is important to be prepared for another life. Ideally I would play for six months a year and work in business for the other six."

ANDY ORAM  
(PACE BOWLER)

Aged 23; born Northampton; Notts since 1997.

"I'M GOING to play Australian grade cricket for Perth in Western Australia from October until March. The first match is on 4 October and I expect to be back for pre-season training here at the beginning of March. I want to come back physically and mentally stronger, ready for next season. A lot of players do go abroad in the winter. I was lucky enough to be approached but others find their own trips and make contacts when they get there. The club is providing me with a car and accommodation. When I was at Northamptonshire I worked in the paper industry on the sales and marketing side. I also have an interest in a restaurant in Northampton."

MATT WHILEY  
(PACE BOWLER)

Aged 18; born Nottingham; Notts from school, debut in this match 0 and 0 not out; 1 for 65 and 0 for 58.

"LAST WINTER I played club cricket in New Zealand for six months after being recommended by the county. This winter I'm going to New Zealand again with the England Under-19 squad, which came as a surprise seeing as I've only now broken into the first team. The tour does not begin until January but there are three squad sessions to attend and next here. Until now I've been relying on some sponsorship to help with living expenses, as well as working for my dad in his plumbing and heating business. I always set my sights on being a cricketer. I've never thought about what I will do if it does not work out."

CHRIS READ  
(WICKETKEEPER)

Aged 26; born Paignton; Notts since 1997.

"I WENT on the England A tours to Kenya and Sri Lanka last winter and I've been selected again for Zimbabwe and South Africa, starting in January. Before then we have a fairly extensive training schedule, with fitness sessions and a week in the Lake District on a team bonding programme. I was at university for a year when I left school but I dropped out when I decided I'd be better off playing cricket. I don't know what I'll do in future years. I might have gone into teaching if I had not played cricket but everything has happened so fast that cricket is all I think about, really. Hopefully, I've got a few years ahead of me in the game."

GRAEME ARCHER  
(BATSMAN)

Aged 27; born Carlisle; Notts since 1992.

"I'LL BE working for the county on the coaching scheme for schools that we operate. I've been to New Zealand four times in past winters and I just want to rest this time. The coaching involves eight to 10 year olds, so it is not too taxing. I really enjoy doing it. I was assistant to the sports master at Durham School the year before I came on the staff. It is good fun working with the kids and they rarely have any trouble from them. The majority of cricketers find things to do off-season through contacts made in the game. Otherwise it is a case of down to the Job Centre. I'm not married and it is a lot harder for cricketers with families to support."

## THE ABSENT INJURED

MARK BOWEN

Seam bowler; aged 30; born Redcar; Notts since 1996.

ABSchoures graduate in chemical engineering, Bowen divides his year between cricket and working for British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield, where he had established a career before Northamptonshire offered him a cricket contract. "They know they are getting someone trained and reliable so they are happy for me to work just for the winter," he said.

TIM ROBINSON

Batsman; aged 40; born Sutton-in-Ashfield; Notts since 1978.

SEVEN YEARS ago, the former England batsman opened his first sports goods shop half a mile from the Trent Bridge ground and has since expanded to three outlets in the Nottingham area. "I had three winters touring with England and others in South Africa, but you cannot go on playing cricket for ever. Setting up the business was something I did with an eye to the future."

KEVIN EVANS

Pace bowler; aged 35; born Calverton; Notts since 1984.

GAVE UP a career with NatWest bank to play cricket. Since then has driven vans for Marks & Spencer and spent four winters working on projects for the sausage and pie manufacturer Pork Farms, among other jobs. "I'm negotiating a new contract and tying up the loose ends of my benefit year so I will not be looking for employment this winter, unless anything comes up that fits in."

RICHARD BATES

Off-spin bowler; aged 26; born Stamford; Notts since 1993.

HAS PLAYED abroad but usually signs up for the county's community coaching scheme, which runs through the winter and involves visiting two or three schools each day. "It provides an income to get by on during the close season and lets you have time to practise and train which you would not get if you were in a nine-to-five job outside cricket."



USMAN AFZAAL  
(OPENING BATSMAN)

Aged 21; born Rawalpindi, Pakistan; Notts from school, debut 1995.



PAUL JOHNSON  
(BATSMAN)

Aged 33; born Newark; Notts from school, debut 1982.

"I'VE BEEN with the county for 18 years and it used to be a financial necessity to find some work for the close season. I've done a variety of things, including jobs in sports shops and record shops and driving a lorry. Once I worked in a butcher's where we had a small abattoir and killed our own beasts. I've been abroad a few times in the past but that's really for the younger man. When you have a family your responsibilities are at home. In my case that is especially important because I have a daughter with Down's Syndrome. I've been appointed cricket development officer for Lincolnshire, which will keep me occupied but let me spend time at home too."



JASON GALLIAN  
(BATSMAN AND CAPTAIN)

Aged 27; born Manly, Australia; Notts since 1998.

"THIS IS going to be a busy winter. We have just parted company with our cricket manager and as captain, I'll be involved in planning the structure of the club for next season and will have an input in any appointments made. I'm also going to do some more work with the marketing department here. I did that last winter before I had started playing for the county, and found it really useful in getting to know people and how things work around the place. In addition, I'm scheduled to go on a pro-am tour to Barbados and I'd also like to take time out to see my mum and sister in Australia."



PAUL FRANKS  
(PACE BOWLER)

Aged 19; born Sutton-in-Ashfield; Notts from school, debut 1996.

"I WENT to South Africa on my second England Under-19 tour last winter and played for the Under-19 side again this summer. I had hopes of going on tour again this winter but did not make it, although I understand I was on the shortlist. I had a good summer, although I only played in 12 matches; I've gained a lot of experience this year. I'm going to be involved with the county's schools coaching scheme, which will take me from November through to pre-season. I'm interested in the coaching and team management side of the game. The idea of putting a county team together appeals to me as something I'd like to do in the future."



MATTHEW DOWMAN  
(BATSMAN)

Aged 24; born Grantham; Notts debut 1993.

"I HAVE a slight stress fracture in the left leg that needs a period of rest, so I will not be going abroad. Last winter I was in New Zealand and I've also had a winter in Australia. I'm buying a house, so that will keep me busy in any case. The county have given me some work on their coaching scheme but I am at that age when you need to start looking to broaden your horizons. For a six-month contract the money is good but you need something for the rest of the year. I might look into studying for a business management qualification. The marketing of cricket clubs is a developing area."

Photographs by Peter Jay



Golf: Former world No 1 cites lack of communication as reason for split from coach who guided him to six majors



David Leadbetter (left) issues the instructions to his star pupil, Nick Faldo, during a rainy session on the practice ground at the Open at Birkdale earlier this year

Empics

## Merit title quest hots up

BY PHIL CASEY  
in Cologne

EUROPE'S TOP three golfers resume battle at the Linde German Masters today - with the Order of Merit title up for grabs. Lee Westwood, Darren Clarke and the five-times winner, Colin Montgomerie, are separated by just £22,000 at the top of the standings with only three events left.

But, with the winner at Gut Larchenhof, near Cologne, collecting £166,600, a victory for any of the trio would make them the hot favourite to top the standings and collect the Vardon Trophy that has been in Montgomerie's possession since 1993.

The 35-year-old Scot has the most impressive recent record, with victory in the One2One British Masters plus 12th and 11th-place finishes in his last three events.

Montgomerie's run is all the more authoritative as it comes after missing the cut for a second successive week at the BMW International in Munich, the first time he has suffered such an ignominy since 1991. Since then he has gone back to working with his old coach, Bill Ferguson, and has begun to cure a destructive hook that had developed, and rediscover his highly consistent fade.

Clarke enjoyed a week off from competition last week and had the luxury of seeing his nearest competitors fall to make significant ground. Westwood, the Order of Merit leader, who has already earned £615,851 this season, finished with a 79 at the Lancome Trophy last week to find himself joint last with Seve Ballesteros.

Montgomerie fared better to finish 11th but is still third behind the Ulsterman, with just three events left which count towards the final standings.

This week also represents Justin Rose's last chance to earn enough money to avoid the trials and tribulations of the European Tour qualifying school.

Rose has yet to make the cut in any of his tournaments since turning professional after his extraordinary fourth-place finish in the Open at Royal Birkdale. The 18-year-old, who last week battled through pre-qualifying, needs to win around £50,000 to earn his card for next season - and that means a top-four finish in Cologne.

The USPGA champion, Vijay Singh, is also in a high-quality field here, along with the defending champion, Bernhard Langer, and Europe's Ryder Cup captain, Mark James.

## Faldo's farewell to guru's guru

BY ANDY FARRELL

VISITING THE Faldo Golf Institute at the Marriott Grande Vista hotel in Orlando in March, it was hard to believe Nick Faldo was across the city at Lake Nona after missing the cut at the Bay Hill Invitational.

As you would expect from something named after the six-times major champion, here was a place where a golfer could really get to grips with practising the game. No details were overlooked.

A pitching area allows you to play to flags at different yardages to learn distance control but without having to move your stance. On the 27-hole putting course, there are holes specifically designed to teach lag-putting. On the nine-hole learning course, a plaque on each tee describes what should be accomplished on the hole.

"We hope that everyone who comes here," explained Jim Richardson, the general manager of the Faldo Institute, "will understand and appreciate and share Nick's love of the game and his drive."

It was Faldo's drive and his love of winning the game's "little tin cups" that drove him to form a formidable alliance with

been unthinkable when the only thing on Faldo's mind was his constant "fine-tuning with Lead". Even though Faldo lives at the complex where Leadbetter has had his golf academy for the past 10 years, the British-born teacher who grew up in Zimbabwe only received word of his star pupil's departure in a letter he picked up after returning home from a trip to the Far East at the week.

"It wasn't very classy," said

Leadbetter, whose father died during the summer. "You put a lot of time and effort with someone like Nick and it is a bit upsetting to get a cursory note to finish it all. We had a good relationship off the field as far as these things go. He hasn't always endeared himself to me from a personal standpoint but he has been a great pupil. I still have the utmost respect for him."

Leadbetter spent most of 1985 and '86 rebuilding Faldo's elegant swing, but one that

was suspect under pressure. In its place, they grooved an action which saw off all challengers in winning three Opens and three US Masters titles. At Muirfield in '87, Faldo parred every hole in the final round, while at Augusta 11 years later he came from six behind to beat Greg Norman by five.

"He has been good for me and I was good for him," Leadbetter said. Leadbetter, who was already working with Nick Price - whose record of three

majors is bettered only by Faldo in the last decade - when his fame grew alongside that of Faldo's. Plenty of other players have since sought out the tall man in the Panama hat on the practice ground.

Some found that the attention they received in comparison with his star client was minimal, others that the technical methods used on Faldo were not right for them. Leadbetter denies that he has just one method of teaching. "I am technical with some people, not with others," he said.

Leadbetter, in demand for books, videos and magazine articles, became a valuable commodity to the International Management Group, alongside Faldo. Both have now left, Faldo setting up his own with his manager of 20 years, John Simpson. One of their first projects was to set up the Golf Institute. "That's why, in the last year, you didn't hear my name," said Leadbetter.

"Chip showed a lot of bottle because he told me that in some cases I would have to do just the opposite of what I've done for years if I wanted to improve. He's thrown in his two-pennypiece and me mine. Slowly, he's unravelled the knots and the last round of the Lancome was good feedback."

Leadbetter said the split was "a bit of a shock". But he added: "I wish him well for the future. At least our relationship lasted longer than either of Nick's two marriages."

could be sorted out. Observation suggested the former was not as good and the latter not as bad as either thought.

But what was obvious was that the teacher could no longer spark his pupil into action. The relationship was stale. "Sometimes I need a new outlook," Leadbetter admitted. Enter Kochlike, an American in his mid-thirties. "I had to do something," Faldo said. "Chip is a disciple of my methods, has read my books and teaches my methods. He's read Hogan, the lot. It was silly that I should be going elsewhere when I had my own tried-and-tested system all set up for me."

"Chip showed a lot of bottle because he told me that in some cases I would have to do just the opposite of what I've done for years if I wanted to improve. He's thrown in his two-pennypiece and me mine. Slowly, he's unravelled the knots and the last round of the Lancome was good feedback."

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## Hick, Caddick and Tufnell on call

CRICKET  
BY JOHN NISBET

GRAEME HICK, the only batsman still playing first-class cricket to have scored 100 centuries, has been put on standby by England's Ashes tour of Australia later this year.

Hick was left out of the party announced earlier this month, but the England selectors said yesterday that he would be a non-travelling reserve, along with the pace bowler Andy Caddick and the left-arm spinner Phil Tufnell.

"The three players we have placed on standby are proven Test cricketers who are very much part of our current plans," the chairman of selectors, David Graveney, said.

All three will be expected to stay fit and be ready to fly to Australia at short notice. England officials also said that Gra-

ham Thorpe and Alex Tudor had passed fitness tests on back and foot injuries respectively, and would leave for Australia with the rest of the England party on 21 October.

Lancashire's John Crawley won the vote for the seventh batting place ahead of Hick, although the Worcestershire man was selected for next month's Wills International Cup one-day tournament in Bangladesh.

The Somerset bowler Caddick

was the leading English wicket-taker this summer with 105 victims, but missed out to Kent's Dean Headley when the squad to tour Australia was announced. The Middlesex spinner Tufnell failed to win a place in any of the England squads, as the Essex veteran Peter Such gained a surprise call-up for the trip to Australia.

Lord MacLaurin, the chairman of the English cricket board, believes there must be

an injection of £300m into the game to produce a successful national side.

Alec Stewart's England team gave the sport a much-needed boost with the first series win on home soil since 1988 this summer when they beat South Africa 2-1, but yesterday MacLaurin said: "Investment in the game is vital.

At the moment, the turnover of cricket is about £60m, but we have identified the need to

invest £300m if we are going to improve facilities for spectators around the country and develop the kind of talent we need to sustain a winning England team."

MacLaurin added: "Cricket is still our national summer sport but it has taken a severe beating over the past few years. Our Test-series win over South Africa was the first hint of a revival which I believe will surge forward into the millennium."

## Smith making waves after his tactical error

SAILING  
BY STUART ALEXANDER  
in Turquay

ON A hostile track and in testing winds the Melges 24 world championship began to settle into an Anglo-American confrontation here yesterday, though Italy's 1996 European champion, Giorgio Zuccoli, would disagree.

After a breezy first day and stiff overnight winds, Turbey was in choppy mood for the second pair of races, which saw the present UK national champion, Rob Smith, fast out of the blocks in Henri Lloyd. But he could not control the chasing Americans - "I failed to listen to my tactician Freddie Blencke at the bottom of the first spinnaker run," he said afterwards - and was hunted down first by Brian Porter and then Vince Brun.

Eventually he was pushed to seventh but came back strongly in the second to make it four winners from four races. The easterly wind had eased from 15 to 10 knots, but the confused waves were still big. The bonus for Smith, apart from moving to fourth overall, was a clean start in clear wind and the choice of the favoured left-hand side of the course up the first leg.

The big waves meant big rewards if you picked up the rhythm and worked them hard downwind, Sproul said. "It feels like we've done a championship already. The beats are really hard work and one mistake is immediately punished by a handful of lost places."

MELGES 24 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: 1. Rob Smith (US), 2. Brian Porter (US), 3. V Smith (GB), 4. 6 T. Brun (US), 5. R. Smith (GB), Race 4: 1. Smith; 2. Weather; 3. Brun, Other Results: 5 R. Porter, 6 T. Brun, 7 C. McLaughlin (US), 8 J. Southward (GB), 9 D. Pritchard (GB), 10. Overall: 1. Porter (US) 32.7 hrs; 2. G. Brun (GB) 34.7; 3. V. Sproul (GB) 49.7; 4. R. Smith (GB) 61.

AMERICAN CUP (Cont'd, after own page, 7 races): Race 4: 1. Brun (US) 26.25 hrs; Race 5: 2. G. Brun (US) 23.25 hrs; Race 6: 3. G. Brun (US) 23.25 hrs; Race 7: 4. Brun (US) 20.25 hrs; Overall: 1. Brun (US) 2. Brun (US) 3. G. Brun (US) 4. Brun (US) 5. Brun (US) 6. Brun (US) 7. Brun (US) 8. Brun (US) 9. Brun (US) 10. Brun (US) 11. Brun (US) 12. Brun (US) 13. Brun (US) 14. Brun (US) 15. Brun (US) 16. Brun (US) 17. Brun (US) 18. Brun (US) 19. Brun (US) 20. Brun (US) 21. Brun (US) 22. Brun (US) 23. Brun (US) 24. Brun (US) 25. Brun (US) 26. Brun (US) 27. Brun (US) 28. Brun (US) 29. Brun (US) 30. Brun (US) 31. Brun (US) 32. Brun (US) 33. Brun (US) 34. Brun (US) 35. Brun (US) 36. Brun (US) 37. Brun (US) 38. Brun (US) 39. Brun (US) 40. Brun (US) 41. Brun (US) 42. Brun (US) 43. Brun (US) 44. Brun (US) 45. Brun (US) 46. Brun (US) 47. Brun (US) 48. Brun (US) 49. Brun (US) 50. Brun (US) 51. Brun (US) 52. Brun (US) 53. Brun (US) 54. Brun (US) 55. Brun (US) 56. Brun (US) 57. Brun (US) 58. 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## Coral/Ladbroke deal: While shrewd punters celebrate the MMC ruling, it is back to the drawing board for the Tote

# Bookies queue up in race for Coral

IT IS, as an estate agent would put it, a unique opportunity to acquire an extensive and much sought-after property. Coral, the third-largest chain of betting shops in the country is back on the market, much to the annoyance of Ladbroke, who paid Bass £375.5m for the Coral estate - including 833 shops, two greyhound stadiums and an off-course credit betting business - almost nine months ago. Peter Mandelson yesterday agreed with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission that the takeover would "operate against the public interest", but if Ladbroke cannot buy Coral, then someone else will.

Chris Bell, Ladbroke's managing director, says that "over 20 people have expressed an interest in acquiring this business". The identity of the successful bidder will be of immense significance both to the off-course betting market, and the chance that racing will enjoy a secure financial future.

The list of interested parties in the deal which fell apart yesterday went well beyond

BY GREG WOOD

Ladbroke, Coral and their staff. The Tote, the state-owned bookie which returns its profits to racing, might have added almost 300 outlets to its current chain of 210 shops, becoming a serious player in the process. This prospect had persuaded the British Horseracing Board to lend public support to the takeover. Now, 133 ex-Coral shops which had already been purchased conditionally by the Tote must immediately return to their former owners.

There were brief, carefully worded expressions of regret from both Tote House and Portman Square yesterday that the residents considered if there might yet be a Plan B.

"We are disappointed that the decision means we will now lose the shops we purchased conditionally from Ladbroke Group at the turn of the year and have been trading in so successfully for the past eight months," Peter Jones, the Tote's chairman, said.

"Nonetheless, we will seek to explore with our financial ad-

visers what options are available to the Tote."

The BHB said that the decision was "a concern, at least until it becomes clear as to where this leaves the Tote."

The obvious answer is that it leaves the Tote back at square one, as a relative bystander in an off-course betting industry which turns over £500m each year. And that is where it will surely remain, unless Jones can somehow find the money to buy Coral outright.

In theory, Bell believes that "Ladbroke can sell it in any way we wish". In practice, though, and particularly in view of the six-month deadline imposed on the sale, it seems unlikely that Ladbroke will want the added complication of splitting up the chain.

Bell also believes that "Coral has had a good year, and it's a better business now than it was when we bought it". An enforced sale it may be, but not necessarily at a bargain price, and the Tote will do well to raise anything like the sum which Ladbroke paid for Coral in the first place.

William Hill, the third member of the "Big Three", was sold last year to Nomura, a Japanese investment bank, with a view to making a healthy short-term profit from resale or flotation. Coral could well go to a buyer with a similar profile and motive, which would at least be good news for hundreds of their employees who would presumably then keep their jobs.

Alternatively, there is one British bookmaker who could find the opportunity difficult to resist. Stanley Leisure, which is based in Liverpool and has about 460 betting shops, mainly in the north, is already the country's fourth-largest book-



The Coral ruling has started a race for other bookmakers to join William Hill, Ladbroke, Stanley and the Tote as forces in the industry

first place.

ie. Swallowing up Coral would propel it in an instant to within sight of William Hill's total of 1,500 outlets. It is a chance which may never present itself again.

While a handful of executives talk telephone numbers, though, the average punter is left to wonder what, if anything, this all means to them. Some, it is true, would hand their daily 50p Yankee to Al Capone if they thought it might increase their chance of winning. Others, though, will consider the important issues of competition, and the future well-being of the racing indus-

try which keeps them entertained.

The punters' self-appointed champion, John McCricket, was in typically garrulous form yesterday, claiming that "this magnificent verdict is their biggest winner since betting shops opened in 1961". Racing, he said, "has been saved from the dangerous prospect of Ladbroke's increasingly controlling betting".

This is true, to a point, although it could be argued that Ladbroke is already so dominant - particularly in terms of its share of turnover - that another 500 or so shops would

have made little realistic difference.

And while it is important that sensible punters will still benefit from added competition in early-prize and ante-post markets, one of the more depressing statistics yesterday was Chris Bell's comment that these areas account for only two per cent of their business. The vast majority of punters, in other words, still bet at the starting price, which all but guarantees a good profit for the bookie, and makes the issue of exactly who is taking their money rather irrelevant.

None the less, a degree of competition between bookmakers will now remain for those with the sense to exploit it.

More worrying, though, is the possible suffocation of the Tote's off-course ambitions, which seemed to offer the most credibility - perhaps only - solution to racing's perennial problem of underfunding. There is still a chance that Peter Jones, an able and imaginative man, will pluck something from the wreckage, but he will need to move, think and deal at high speed.

If the money is not there for a wholesale takeover, an alter-

native might be a joint approach with Stanley Leisure, with Coral divided up on a north-south basis. Stanley, after all, would need only the southern shops to secure a true national presence, while the Tote would still increase its estate by as much as 200 per cent.

If, however, the Tote emerges empty-handed, racing's long-term prospects will undoubtedly be damaged. Punters may enjoy extra competition tomorrow, but they, and the vast industry they support, may also pay the price in 10 years' time.

Business, page 19

### HISTORY OF CORAL BOOKMAKERS

1926: Joe Coral launches career as an on-course bookmaker  
1943: Starts credit telephone betting office in London's West End  
1961: Opens first high-street shop on legalisation of betting shops  
1962: Owns just 23 of Britain's 13,340 betting shops  
1971: Merger with Mark Lane chain brings Coral's estate to 589 shops  
1974: Coral becomes public company and moves into hotels, casinos and bingo  
1977: Four firms dominate off-course betting. Coral owns 24% of Britain's 13,254 betting shops  
1981: Taken over by Bass (Joe Coral becomes life president)  
1995: Buys Arthur Prince chain of 114 shops  
1996: Joe Coral dies  
1998: Ladbroke announce a £375.5m takeover but the deal is referred to the Monopolies & Merger commission  
1998 (September): The Trade Secretary, Peter Mandelson, blocks Ladbroke's acquisition of Coral bookmakers chain from Bass

### GOODWOOD

#### HYPERION

2.00 Sound Appeal 4.00 Deadly Nightshade (nb)  
2.30 BE MY WISH (nap) 4.35 Miss Rimex  
3.00 Mihman 5.05 Nasasyem

3.30 Decorated Hero

GOING: Good to firm (Penrometer reading 33).  
STALLS: Straight course - stands side round course - inside.  
DRAW ADVANTAGE: High for 230; 300; 320 & 436.  
■ Right-hand course with sharp bends and gradients.  
■ Course is N of Chichester between A286 and A285. Chichester station 4m. ADMINISTRATION: Richmond Enclosure E7, Gordon Enclosure E8. Public Enclosure E9 (over-65s £3). Accompanied under-17s a free all enclosures. CAR PARK: 22, for free.  
■ LEADING TRAINERS: R Harmer 36-383 (P Cole 32-34 (20.9%); A Gordon 27-47 (16.4%); J Donkin 27-28 (12.3%); H Codd 26-21 (11.2%); I Balling 25-10 (12.5%); L Dostor 43-29 (20.7%); P Eddery 40-286 (14%); Pat Eddery 37-218 (11.2%); R Hill 21-29 (6.3%); K Fallon 10-100 (10%); ■ FAVOURITES: 249-210 (34.6%).  
BLINKERS: FIRST TIME: Night Spirit (2.30); King Of Tunes (3.00).

FORM GUIDE

Diamond Drift: 25 lower rating for the latest easy success on AW. Well drawn here and in a softish race but even 8f makes rates him inferior on turf.

Belmont: Off the course to disappoint when the chips are down ( beaten by Pursuit Of Gold at Bath last time). Tried over longer trip here but a tough race in which to break him.

Shamrock Song: Latest win at Newcastle gained over a mile and hasn't been out since an AW defeat in June (won beaten 4th to Listable Flair).

Be My Wish: Relayed 50f by Kieren Fallon after the Ascot win over the trip (best Festival). Creditable 6th to Golden Fortune at Salisbury last time.

Mr P: Relayed 50f by Kieren Fallon after the Ascot win over the trip (best Festival). Creditable 6th to Golden Fortune at Salisbury last time behind Spanish Fern, though drawn sternly against her. Captain of Britain

and the rest of the field.

Shamrock Song: Latest win at Newcastle gained over a mile and hasn't been out since an AW defeat in June (won beaten 4th to Listable Flair).

Belmont: Relayed 50f by Kieren Fallon after the Ascot win over the trip (best Festival). Creditable 6th to Golden Fortune at Salisbury last time.

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# Mindless exploitation of the popular game

FROM THE extreme of Alan Harker's reactionary declaration 30 years ago that matches would not be televised live while he remained secretary of the Football League, to the bombardment we have come under.

This week the Professional Footballers' Association chief executive, Gordon Taylor, told a pay-per-view conference: "I'm in the business and even I'm saying: 'Oh, no, not another live game'."

Taylor's concern is understandable. Sky's transmission of tonight's big encounter between Manchester United and Liverpool makes it 15 live matches in 11 days on satellite and terrestrial channels. Even allowing for Sky's limited audience, this mindless exploitation of foot-

ball's popularity should carry a health warning.

Imagine a time in the future when students of sporting history go back to see where the rot set in for a game that had risen above all others. If so, who was to blame?

The clubs in their myopic failure to understand that greed brings its own retribution? Opportunists who saw football as a vehicle for personal prosperity? Administrators blind to the possibility of overkill?

Perhaps all three. Certainly football is on dangerous ground if it believes that there is no limit to what can be extracted from the public, both in ticket prices and television subscriptions.

I was mentioning this the other day to a friend of many years, an

Arsenal season-ticket holder who first watched them during the Second World War and still follows the game closely. What he does not do is switch on automatically whenever football is shown on television.

"Of course, if it's my club on the box I'm glued to the screen, but otherwise it takes the best teams to get my attention," he said. "I'm sure there are people so addicted to the game that they are suckers for everything that's shown, but I don't know any."

Another friend often works on his stamp collection while keeping an ear cocked to the television commentary. "I know that the exciting moments will be repeated in action replays, so I get on with what I'm doing," he said.



**KEN JONES**

There may be a lesson here for the clubs and their television paymasters. If people are coming to regard football on television as background entertainment, they

are unlikely to subscribe on a match-to-match basis.

The vibes I am getting correspond roughly to a decision taken personally when the Premier League took up with Rupert Murdoch. It was not only to be selective about televised football, but to ration the experience.

Later, when appearing on a BBC radio programme, I discovered that the Football Association's chief executive, Graham Kelly, had chosen a similar policy. Kelly may not remember this, but I have it on a recording.

You can come across football managers who admit privately that they only watch televised matches from which valuable information may be gleaned, or those that

promise to be exceptional. "There is too much football on television," the Football Association's director of coaching, Howard Wilkinson, said when in charge at Leeds United. A man of varied tastes, Wilkinson feared the effect of overkill.

Sky's transmission of last Sunday's match between Arsenal and Manchester United included the usual hyperbolic references to forthcoming attractions: a full week of football on Murdoch's channels. This made you wonder where the game is going, and what the future holds for it.

Any one with half a grasp of simple economics is bound to feel that the Football League's proposed experiment with pay-per-view is asking too much of potential

subscribers. The average viewing figures for matches shown live by Sky Sports and the two main terrestrial channels are down further from last season. The recent UEFA Cup tie between Liverpool and Kosice reached only 2.2m viewers when put out by Channel 5.

What we have is a situation that caused Taylor to suggest that English football could find itself looking at a dead goose, instead of golden eggs.

"These are matches the viewer is getting free or on subscription," Taylor said. "What is going to happen when they are asked to pay?"

If football's negotiators have any sense, and sometimes you have to wonder, they should give that thought some serious attention.

England coach sues newspaper as FA dismisses claims it did not authorise CD interview deal as 'rubbish'

# Hoddle's call-up for his lawyers

BY NICK HARRIS

GLENN HODDLE'S lawyer said last night the England coach was suing a national newspaper for suggesting he had jeopardised the Football Association's commercial interests.

Peter Baines of Pictons Solicitors, said it had been alleged that because Hoddle has endorsed a series of CDs containing interviews with England players - each CD is introduced by Hoddle and has a player in an England kit on the cover - the FA has lost out on commercial income. It has also been suggested, he added, that Hoddle's endorsement of the CDs would cause the FA "major commercial embarrassment".

"The FA have confirmed that they have been fully aware of Glenn Hoddle's involvement and that it has their blessing," Baines said in a statement. "The [newspaper article] is clearly calculated to discredit our client and to damage his reputation and we have been instructed to take legal action to obtain redress for our client."

Hoddle's decision to take legal action comes after several months of criticism about his behaviour while



Glenn Hoddle, who yesterday started to fight back against allegations about his commercial activities, presents his World Cup Diary to the media at its launch in August

Peter Joy

in charge of the national side. He was particularly criticised for using the faith healer, Eileen Dreyery, in his squad's preparations for France 98, and for profiting from the publication of his World Cup diary - complete with revelations about a number of current players. It appears Hoddle now believes there is a campaign among some sections of the media to oust him from his job and he has taken the action to half an escalation in allegations about his conduct.

The FA moved to support Hoddle yesterday, dismissing claims that the CD endorsement had been unauthorised as "absolute rubbish". An FA spokesman, Steve Double, said: "We have been fully aware of Glenn's involvement in this and it doesn't conflict in any way with our commercial policies. It is only a problem

for us if a player or coach endorses a product in conflict with us." Double added that all endorsements were scrutinised by the FA's commercial department to ensure that they did not conflict with other sponsorships - a player advertising a breakdown recovery company company, for example, when Green Flag already sponsors the national side.

"Players and staff are free to endorse products as long as they are not in conflict," Double said. In the case of the CDs, he said: "We're effectively talking about an interview."

Baines, Hoddle's director of three other companies, but their sole function, said Baines, is to handle his commercial income. The Sanctuary is currently applying for charitable status and Baines added that Hoddle was entitled to earn money from other sources.

"When you are a public figure and commercial opportunities come your way, it's not surprising to take advantage of them," he said.

Dennis Roach, Hoddle's agent, denied that the England coach has abused his position for financial gain. "Between last December and the World Cup, Glenn Hoddle could

have made himself thousands but he knocked it back to concentrate on his job coaching the England football team," Roach said. He added that Hoddle had turned down offers of advertising work that may have netted him hundreds of thousands of pounds, including commercials - for Sainsbury's, a cola company, and a car manufacturer, among others - and had also turned down a lucrative television commercial for the sports equipment maker, Mitre.

Apart from his diary and its serialisation, however, Hoddle does have incomes from several sources. In addition to money from his book, he

makes money from the CD work, from a contract with Mitre to have his name on footballs and football boots, and from television punditry on ITV.

Hoddle is not alone in being an England manager who has profited while in charge of the national side. Bobby Robson and Terry Venables both wrote books while in charge, while Graham Taylor was reportedly paid a large fee to take part in the notorious documentary that trailed him through his time in the job. Robson's and Venables' books differed from Hoddle's, however, in that they were not controversial. Hoddle's mistake was to make his controversial to sue.

## Dicks defies the odds to make memorable return

BY TOMMY STANIFORTH

"Then I went over to Alabama to see a surgeon called James Andrews. He said there was an operation I could have but it was a one-in-10 chance of succeeding and a 60-40 chance it would get worse. When I came round from the anaesthetic I was in absolute agony. That was my lowest moment, but once the pain went away I realised why I had done it. All I want to do is play football."

Dicks got a fantastic reception from the 25,000-strong crowd on Tuesday and wearing the captain's armband he was inspirational from the first whistle. The only disappointment was that although he helped the Hammers win 1-0 it was not enough to prevent them going out of the competition 2-1 on aggregate.

"Where football is concerned I don't need motivating," said the 30-year-old left-back. "It has been a long

time. I went out there and I knew I would get a good reception - although I didn't think it would be that good - and that is all I need. The adrenaline started flowing."

"After the first five minutes I was shattered. But the longer it went on the better I felt. Although we won 1-0 it was a bad night for the club. But for me it was a memorable night."

Dicks' performance has almost guaranteed his place in the team against Southampton on Monday. "I shall have a couple of days off to let the knee settle down and hopefully I shall play on Monday. But there are a lot of great players here now and you have to really fight hard for your place in every game," he said.

Redknapp, the West Ham manager, is ready to pick him again and said: "After a performance like that it is difficult to leave him out of our next game. I shall have to find a place for him. I can't speak highly enough about what Julian has



Dicks: Risky knee operation

achieved. To come back and play again after the horrific surgery he has been through, and without having trained, he is a freak."

"Fifteen months ago we sat in my office and he said he was finished, his knee was knackered. The operation was a last-ditch attempt, and even after it the doctors said he'd never play again. It shows how much character he has, and why he is one of the all-time great West Ham players."

STEVE SIMONSEN may have become Britain's most expensive goalkeeper yesterday - but he knows that his price tag alone will not guarantee a place in the Everton first team.

The England Under-21 international also became the country's most expensive teenager when he moved to Goodison Park for £3.3m from Tranmere Rovers yesterday, after months of negotiations.

Simonsen does not expect to go straight into the side for Saturday's home game with Blackburn. Thomas Myhre, the Howard Kendall purchase who took over from Neville Southall last season, is in the man in possession of the No 1 jersey - and Simonsen is sure he will have to wait for his chance.

The Norwegian international Myhre, who cost £200,000 last November, has been put under intense pressure by the arrival of Simonsen as the Everton manager, Walter Smith, took his spending to

more than £15m since assuming the reins in the summer. Simonsen said: "Thomas has come in and done a good job. I've been watching him and he's been brilliant since he arrived to take over from Neville Southall last season. It will be good competition for me, and I know Thomas feels the same way about it."

"Obviously I'd love to be thrown in, but if Thomas keeps his form up there is nothing I can do. It will be a case of just chipping away and hoping I get the chance."

Simonsen spent time training alongside Myhre at Everton last season, and has also had special coaching from Southall at Tranmere. Now he has the chance to take over from them both. Simonsen added: "The fee doesn't bother me, you tend not to think about that. All I want to do is get down to my work."

Simonsen has made a swift rise to prominence, having played fewer than 40 League games for Tranmere.



Simonsen: Awaits his chance

He forced his way into John Aldridge's side last season and set a new club record of seven consecutive clean sheets. At 21, he won a reputation for the ability to command his area.

Simonsen added: "It's been such a long time waiting for the move, particularly as I first heard about the rumours at the back end of last season. I always felt I'd like to move on, but I'm settled in the area now and I don't even have to move house."

# Coaches oppose super league

EUROPE'S LEADING national coaches said yesterday that a super league would act against the interests of international football.

At the end of a three-day Uefa conference, the top coaches called on both the European governing body and international governing body, Fifa, to protect national teams from what they said were purely commercial interests.

"The introduction of private commercial leagues could spell the end of national teams and the public should be aware of the threat to the future of the game at international level," the coaches said in a statement.

The Milan-based media sales group Media Partners hopes to launch the new Super League featuring 36 European clubs in 2000. The competition will generate \$2bn (£1.2bn) a year in revenue, it predicts.

Delegates from 50 Uefa member associations attending the conference said Uefa and Fifa should pave the way for greater cooperation between football clubs and the national sides.

The coaches also hit out at the controversial "Golden Goal" knock-out rule, saying it was an unsporting and incorrect way of deciding the outcome of a game.

The Uefa general secretary, Gerhard Aigner, said that the European body would take the coaches' points on board but was not considering dropping the rule.

Referees' interpretations of certain aspects of the laws of the game need to be unified and professional refereeing should be introduced, the coaches said.

They pressed for unified criteria on issues such as tackling from behind as well as concepts like "passive offside" (not interfering with play) to avoid confusion.

If you are going to introduce a modification, then people should know a season in advance so leagues and coaches can get used to it," Andy Roxburgh, the Uefa technical director and former Scotland manager, told a news conference.

The coaches also called for a second round with group matches in World Cup finals instead of the current system where there is a knock-out phase after the first round.

The former French coach

FOOTBALL  
BY DERRICK WHYTE

Aimé Jacquet, who stepped down after steering France to their first World Cup triumph, was given a special award by the Uefa president, Lennart Johansson. The Croatian coach, Miroslav Blazevic, whose team secured third place in the World Cup finals in France, also received an award.

Barcelona issued a hands-off warning to clubs eyeing their 15-year-old Nigerian striker Hauzana Babangida by slapping an 800 million pesetas (£3.3m) price tag on him on Wednesday.

Babangida, the younger brother of Ajax Amsterdam and Nigerian international striker Tijani Babangida, became the youngest person in Spanish league history to have a buy-out clause inserted into his contract.

The 15-year-old is currently playing for the Barcelona reserve team in the Spanish second division but, after impressing during pre-season, many observers expect him to be incorporated into the first team squad during the December "transfer window".

Ironically, the man whose place he could be taking is his compatriot, Emmanuel Amunike, who has a long term knee injury and is likely to miss the rest of the Spanish season.

Babangida, who celebrates his 16th birthday on October 1, has hit the headlines in Spain not just for his playing ability.

Last season he scored 37 goals in 21 games for Barcelona's youth side which also led to some controversy.

Infuriated in one match, he was sent to hospital for X-rays which some critics said showed that bone scans taken indicated he was at least three years older than the date claimed by the Catalan club.

Barcelona club doctors shrugged off the controversy by saying Babangida was "well developed for his age".

The Hungarian authorities said yesterday that they will introduce a compulsory identity card scheme for supporters from next season in a bid to curb a wave of hooliganism.

Attila Kovacs, the president of the Hungarian Football Federation, said that only fans with the card would be able to buy tickets or enter stadiums.

The coaches also called for a second round with group matches in World Cup finals instead of the current system where there is a knock-out phase after the first round.

The former French coach



The Chicago Cubs' Sammy Sosa crashes into catcher Bobby Hughes during Tuesday night's game at Milwaukee. Sosa remained on 63 home runs

AP

## Yankees close in on all-time wins record

THE NEW YORK Yankees are just one win away from breaking a club record which has stood for 71 years after sweeping both games of a double-header with the Central Division champions, the Cleveland Indians, on Tuesday. They won their 108th and 109th matches of the season to stand within one victory of the 1927 Yankees record of 110 wins.

In the afternoon opener, rookie Shane Spencer belted two home runs and Tino Mar-

tinez end his batting drought with a home run and four runs batted in as the Yankees out-slugged Cleveland 10-4.

Spencer smacked solo homers off the Indians pitcher Dave Bush in the second and fourth innings. The Yankees manager, Joe Torre, said: "I just wanted to get him some at-bats and he's opened some eyes with the power he's shown."

In the second game, Ricky Ledee drove in three runs as the Yankees won 5-1.

New York now need to win three of their remaining five

games to eclipse the 1954 Indians' American League record of 111 victories.

The Yankees' Chili Davies said: "It's something that's reachable and with only five games left. Why not go for it? That will leave us on a very sweet note going into the playoffs."

At Anaheim, Rich Helling became the third 20-game winner in the major leagues as the Texas Rangers opened a two-game lead in the American

League West with a 9-1 rout of the Angels.

The Rangers went into the three-game showdown tied for first place with Anaheim and have come up with back-to-back 9-1 victories.

Helling (20 wins, 7 losses) joined Tom Glavine of Atlanta and Roger Clemens of Toronto as baseball's 20-game winners.

In Seattle, Ken Griffey Jr hit his league-leading 54th and 55th home runs of the season

and put himself in some very lofty company by reaching 140 RBI for the third consecutive season as the Mariners edged the Oakland Athletics 7-6.

Griffey smacked a solo blast in the third inning off Jay Witasick and sparked a three-run fifth inning with another solo shot. Griffey, who also scored the winning run in the sixth, joined Yankee legends Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig as the only players ever to compile 140 RBI in three seasons running.

## Festina rider sues over substance abuse claims

LAWYERS FOR THE French cyclist Richard Virenque said yesterday that they plan to file a suit against Willy Voet, the former Festina physiotherapist, who had a long term knee injury and is likely to miss the rest of the Spanish season.

Babangida, who celebrates his 16th birthday on October 1, has hit the headlines in Spain not just for his playing ability.

Last season he scored 37 goals in 21 games for Barcelona's youth side which also led to some controversy.

Infuriated in one match, he was sent to hospital for X-rays which some critics said showed that bone scans taken indicated he was at least three years older than the date claimed by the Catalan club.

Barcelona club doctors shrugged off the controversy by saying Babangida was "well developed for his age".

The Hungarian authorities said yesterday that they will introduce a compulsory identity card scheme for supporters from next season in a bid to curb a wave of hooliganism.

Attila Kovacs, the president of the Hungarian Football Federation, said that only fans with the card would be able to buy tickets or enter stadiums.

other members of the Festina team that was expelled from the Tour de France.

"How dare Richard say to me he doesn't take drugs," Voet said in an interview published on Tuesday by the newspaper *Le Parisien*. "He takes the same products as the other racers - no more, no less."

Voet said only three members

of the nine-man Festina team, Christophe Bassons, Patrice Halgand and Laurent Lefevre, had not taken the drugs.

He also accused Festina's team doctor, Eric Ryckaert, of administering the drug and urged authorities not to take disciplinary action against him.

Festina has kicked out of the Tour de France after admitting to the systematic use of the banned substance erythropoietin.

But Virenque has consistently denied using the drug and has urged authorities not to take disciplinary action against him.

Voet is one of three Festina

team officials currently under formal investigation after the Tour de France drug scandal. The others are Ryckaert and the team director, Bruno Roussel.

On Monday the French Cycling Federation prevented Festina from racing in October's world championships.

## Holyfield overture to Lewis

### BOXING

THE WORLD Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation heavyweight champion, Evander Holyfield, has said he wants to fight Lennox Lewis but has hedged his bets on a Mike Tyson rematch.

Holyfield has just defended his IBF title with an unconvincing points win over the unranked Vaughn Bean. His next opponent is scheduled to be Henry Akinwande, while Lewis will this weekend put his title on the line against Croatia's Zeljko Mavrovic in Connecticut.

Holyfield said Lewis, the World Boxing Council champion, "is looking forward to fighting him. He's a wanted man."

The promoter Don King has also described Lewis as "wanted" and any deal could be worth £1.5m to Holyfield for the chance to unify the major belts.

Tyson must undergo psychiatric tests before a Nevada Athletic Commission panel will consider ending the ban imposed upon him last year for biting Holyfield's ear in a title fight.

Holyfield, with two victories

### BADMINTON

The National Lottery is to award £1.3m to the Badminton Association of England and their World Class Performance Programme.

### BASKETBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE: New York 10, Cleveland 4 (first game); NY Yankees 10, Tampa Bay 9; Boston 11, Tampa Bay 8; Toronto 7, Baltimore 3; Detroit 14; Kansas City 4; Chicago White Sox 4; Minnesota 1; Texas 9; Anaheim 1; Seattle 7.

### EAST DIVISION

Atlanta 109, 48-56; NY 88, 56-61; Philadelphia 73, 44-65; Boston 70, 45-61; Florida 51, 108-325, 50%.

### CENTRAL DIVISION

Houston 99, 55-62; St Louis 80, 57-67; 11; Chicago 78, 50-77; 11; Cleveland 74, 48-68; 25; Milwaukee 69, 48-59; 33; Pittsburgh 74, 48-59; 33.

### WEST DIVISION

San Diego 96, 62-68; 6; LA 95, 62-68; 10; San Francisco 80, 57-71, 10; Seattle 71, 57-70, 15%; Colorado 73, 53-75; 21; Arizona 63, 95-399, 25%.

### CENTRAL DIVISION

Cleveland 88, 69-56; 11; Chicago White Sox 70, 49-60; 11; Kansas City 71, 65-45; 16%; Minnesota 63, 95-399, 25%.

### WEST DIVISION

Texas 82, 72-54; 11; Arizona 74, 82-47; 18%; Oakland 71, 71-68; 14; LA 72, 57-61.

### TRAIL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Philadelphia 10; Cincinnati 9; Florida 1; Montreal 7; New York 10; Arizona 3; Colorado 8; New York 10; San Francisco 4; Pittsburgh 4; Houston 6; San Diego 2.

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## SPORT

HODDLE GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS P28 • FALDO'S GOODBYE GURU P25

# Ferguson demands more pride

THE REBEL Manchester United supporters can take at face value BSkyB's promise not to further tamper with kick-off times if their Old Trafford takeover is successful. Why should they? The satellite broadcaster is doing it already.

United versus Liverpool is arguably the fiercest-fought match in the Premiership season and a fixture as redolent of Lancashire tradition as hot pot. So they play it on the day least accustomed to hosting football, Thursday.

If you are one of Old Trafford's long-distance season ticket holders who has no chance of making the match after work then you will be interested, if not wholly surprised, in the reason: television.

BSkyB wanted to show the game live but its normal transmission times of Sunday or Monday were ruled out because of both clubs' European commitments next week. Saturday morning was mooted, as it has been for this fixture in the past, but then someone saw a gap in the crowded calendar. Hence tonight's 8pm kick-off.

The change has been embraced by the clubs because it gives them more time to prepare for Bayern Munich and Kosice respectively, but when United need to cultivate as many friends as possible among their supporters - yesterday the 28,000 shareholders were mailed leaflets opposing the BSkyB takeover - the timing is unfortunate.

Tonight's match will be the eighth shown live on television in the last nine days (*Match of the Day* highlights were shown on Saturday in addition), which ought to merit a reference to the Monopolies Commission, if only from the steakable chunk of the population who have no interest in football. It ought to be too much, except this match whets even over-fed appetites.

BY GUY HODGSON

"You never know how these games will go because they are two good teams," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said yesterday. "It's always a hard game, passionate and entertaining and there are a lot of good players on both sides. It's an amazing derby because this is not a new-found rivalry, it's been going on for three decades at least, at city level as well as between the teams."

United gave their fans every reason to fear the worst in this pressure-cooker game with a performance against Arsenal on Sunday which was so feeble that to describe their display as limp would be to insult increasing tomales sufferers.

"I hope my players realise how badly they let themselves down," Ferguson said, darkly.

One could question the United manager's tactic of playing Ryan Giggs and Dwight Yorke against the towering Arsenal central defenders, but what was particularly disappointing was the lack of force in midfield. Angels normally fear to tread when Roy Keane and Nicky Butt are snapping on Sunday, even before Butt was sent off, Patrick Vieira and Michael Hughes were allowed to dominate.

"Roy Keane is not a good loser," Ferguson said, anticipating a positive reaction tonight from a player who spent nearly a year recovering from a knee injury. "He won't have enjoyed what happened on Sunday."

"He's done better than I thought. We'll have to give him a break soon because he's been out for a long time and although he can survive on adrenaline for a few games he will hit a plateau or even dip. He needs to restore his energy levels."

A fully fit Keane against Paul Ince would be a clash to savour, particularly as the latter was described as a "big-time char-

acter" by Ferguson this week in a television documentary. Ince missed Saturday's draw against Charlton, however, and is doubtful for tonight.

His presence will be missed because, after comprehensively defeating Kosice in Slovakia, Liverpool were fortunate to get a point on Saturday when their chronic defensive flaws were exposed once more. Each year you expect something better from this richly talented team but, even though players come and go, the character-harrowing inconsistent remains the same.

There lies the key to the match. Last season Liverpool were reduced to 10 men for a half after Michael Owen was sent off yet they held on for a draw, denting United's title challenge. A show of similar backbone could embarrass United, but who knows how this tickle team will perform tonight?

"There are no worries about motivating the players. They don't come any bigger than us against United," Liverpool's joint-manager, Roy Evans, said.

"I have plenty of players," Ferguson said, mindful of both sides' natures. "I just have to pick the right team. The Giggs-Yorke partnership didn't work at all against Arsenal but it doesn't mean I won't try it again. There won't be a lot of changes although I have options, including bringing in Ole Gunnar Solskjær, Andy Cole and Paul Scholes."

If that suggests Ferguson is unlikely to release any of his squad, it is correct. Crystal Palace are rumoured to want Teddy Sheringham and Aston Villa have inquired about Andy Cole, but neither will succeed.

"I want to win the lottery but I can't," Ferguson said. "There are no players for sale. We need a strong squad to survive the season and we've got one. I think we should keep it."

## Kournikova the princess of power



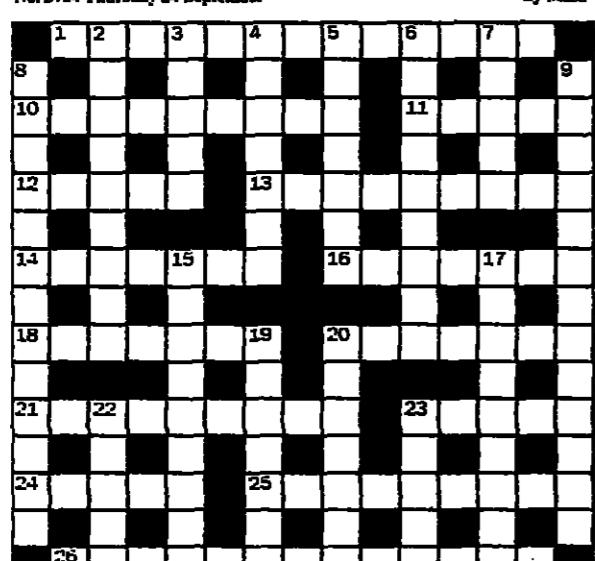
Russia's Anna Kournikova shows the power which proved too much for Adriana Garsi, of the Czech Republic, during the first round of the Princess Cup in Tokyo yesterday. Kournikova, seeded No 5, won 6-2, 6-1. AFP

### THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3724 Thursday 24 September

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



ACROSS  
1 It ensures a fair run for one's money (13)  
10 Try and goal reported at all? (9)  
11 Communications with the Parisian in American state (5)  
12 Green, needing oxygen to survive (5)  
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354 Left bouquet for a girl (5)  
355 Abuse no note on instrument (5)  
356 Ill-fated star? Possibly a red giant (9)  
357 Chap in saloon could be the waiter here (5-8)  
358 Green, needing oxygen to survive (5)  
359 One at the wheel's a supplier covering Michigan (9)  
360 Officer has to tack outside harbour (7)  
361 Fishes North for king crabs? (7)  
362 Falls back on reserves (7)  
363 Widely-known wrench on charge (7)  
364 Whip's turned back red (one hears) in general (9)  
365 Left bouquet for a girl (5)  
366 Abuse no note on instrument (5)  
367 Ill